

THE
MOURNERS
Memorial,

IN
TWO SERMONS;

On the Death of the Truly Pious
Mrs. SUSANNA SOAME,
Late Wife of
Bartholomew Soame of Thurlow, Esq;
Who Deceased *Febru.* 14. 169 $\frac{1}{2}$.

With some Account of Her
LIFE & DEATH.

By { Timothy Wright, } Ministers of
{ Robert Fleming, } the Gospel.

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To the much Honoured
BARTHOLOMEW SOAME
of Little Thurlow, Esq;

Honoured Sir,

T*hat Relation which these Discourses have to One who a few days ago stood in the nearest upon earth to your self, rendering them peculiarly Yours, doth intitle them to your Patronage; And considering that upon the same account they may be acceptable to many others unto whom her Memory is precious, tho' as they are Ours we have little reason to expect they should be so to any: We do with the greater readiness, in Obedience to your Commands, here humbly present them to your Hand in that plain Countrey-dress in which they were lately directed to your Ear among many others, to whom they were in that respect the more suitable,*

Epistle Dedicatory.

as well as to the solemnity of the Occasion ; Hoping that as through the Divine Grace they found some Access unto your Heart, when they first visited your Ear, so they may be of some further use by the blessing of God to renew, or rather fix and settle the impressions which were then made, being now again presented to your Eye.

Sir, As there is none more deeply sensible of the greatness of the loss, which You and Yours have sustained by the Death of so near and dear, and every way useful a Relative ; so there is none more sincerely desirous than We are, to the utmost of our power, to be assistant both to You and them in bearing your present Burdens, as far as Christianity doth oblige, and Capacitate us to be mutually helpful to one another in fulfilling that part of the Law of Christ. And surely it cannot choose but be a very relieving thought to you to consider what a vast disproportion there is between your Temporal loss, and her Eternal gain,
by

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by her happy Exchange of a frail, Tottering Earthly Tabernacle for an Houle not made with hands Eternal in the Heavens. It may very well be a comfortable Alleviation to your Grief and Sorrow under the present afflictive dispensation, when you first look backward and reflect upon the many wearisome and painful Exercises, which One whom you so Dearly loved, and then so heartily pityed, did for so long a time undergo in a distempered body; and then look forward, and consider that She is now Eternally freed from all, being happily arrived at that Everlasting Rest, where there is not only perfect ease, but fulness of joy to make it the more compleat, complacential and delightful. That Eternal weight of Glory which she is now in the possession of doth infinitely preponderate both her former sufferings in a mortal body, and your present heavy affliction and sorrow upon her going out of it. And therefore You have greater reason to rejoyce than to weep

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for her, in as much as she is now gone unto her Heavenly Father. And tho' it cannot be denied, but we have all reason to weep for our selves; as indeed the state of this wretched World in general, (as well as of particular Families) is sadly to be lamented, when Persons of Eminent endowments, and singular usefulness in their respective stations are in so great numbers (as they have been of late) translated out of it, as being no longer worthy of such excellent Inhabitants, and so few in many places springing up in their room: Yet even in this respect we have no reason to sorrow as those that have no hope; For, As there are in your Family many pleasant and hopeful young Plants, upon which the Blessing of Abraham is continually descending to make them yet more and more fruitful in every good work, that it may still retain the beautiful Complexion of a Watered Garden, and all that see them may acknowledge that they are the Seed which the Lord hath blessed:

Gen. 17.

v. 7.

Isa. 58.

v. 11.

cap. 61.

v. 9.

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bleſſed : So with reſpect to the poor-
adjacent Countrey, who alſo have ſuſ-
tained a great loſs (of which they are
very ſenſible) in the Deceafe of One
who, by your kind aſſiſtance and chear-
ful Concurrence, was more immediate-
ly inſtrumental in procuring for them
ſuch plain wholeſome food for their
Souls, as they had a grateful reliſh of
notwithſtanding what in that kind they
do otherwiſe enjoy ; We are greatly
encouraged to hope that the Father of
Spirits, will in his wiſe, and good
Providence make up this loſs alſo to
them by continuing your Affairs here in
ſuch a poſture, that you may yet fur-
ther purſue your own beneficent and
charitable inclination towards your
Neighbours and Country-men, in affor-
ding them the like additional helps ſtill
for their ſpiritual improvement. And
in ſo doing We doubt not but You will
find the Bleſſings of Heaven ſtill mul-
tiplied upon your Family, and abun-
dance of peace and ſatisfaction in your
own Spirit, in perſiſting in and reflect-

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ing upon such a charitable piece of Service to the Souls of men. In order whereunto both You and Yours (of whose numerous favours to each of us we shall ever retain a most grateful sense) are with no less sincerity than constancy recommended daily to the Compassionate Care of the Father of Mercys, and the God of all Grace and Consolation, by,

Honoured Sir,

Thurlow - Hall
March, 7th.
169 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Your greatly obliged,
faithful and humble
Servants in Christ,



Timothy Wright,
Robert Fleming.



A Funeral Sermon.

By Timothy Wright, Chaplain
in the Family.

Rom. 2. 7.

*To them, who by patient continuance
in well doing, seek for Glory and
Honour, and Immortality; Eternal
Life.*

Which words as connected with v. 6. are thus:

*Who will render to every man according to
his deeds: To them, who by patient con-
tinuance in well-doing seek for Glory,
and Honour, and Immortality; Eternal
Life.*

IT having pleased Almighty God,
the Sovereign disposer of all things,
(*in whose hands all our times are*) to
remove from us, and take unto him-
self, our deservedly Honoured, Dear, and
useful Friend; who (as you all know) was
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in her life-time, not without the condescending and chearful Concurrence of Her *surviving Head*, very instrumental for the propagating the True knowledge of Christ Jesus among you, by the Preaching of the Gospel in this place.

It is now the commendable and pious desire, and appointment of her nearest *surviving Relatives*, that we should this day here pay our last *solemn*, and *publick Respects* together unto her *Memory*, in a Sermon or two dedicated unto it. And my *Station* in the Family laying me under a peculiar Obligation to bear my part in this solemn service, (tho' otherwise unworthy of it;) it was not long after, I began more closely to apply my thoughts to the making some slender preparation for it, that this Text presented it self to my mind, as a proper subject for our most serious meditation on this sorrowful occasion: *To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, &c.* A Scripture that was eminently Exemplified in her *Life*, and is now more fully accomplished, and made good to her, in her *death*; and upon both accounts, I hope, so much the more adapted for our present instruction, in Conjunction with
that

that awakening and teaching Providence, which gave the occasion to this *Discourse* upon it: Which is designed both for an *instructive lesson* to the *living*, and a *solemn Memorial* of the *dead*; and therefore I shall endeavour, by the Divine assistance, to cast it into such a *Method*, and *form*, as may be in some measure accommodate to both parts of that *design*; but to the *latter* in subserviency to the *former*, as that which is principally to be regarded in such *sacred discourses*.

In the Words we have two things more generally offered to our serious consideration. 1. The descriptive Character of the Heirs of future blessedness; they are such *who by patient continuance in well doing seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*. 2. The final Happiness unto which they shall at last be advanced by the gracious designation, and appointment of their *Heavenly Father*: And this is briefly sum'd up in those two comprehensive words, *Eternal life*; which indeed are both too big for our thoughts in this dark, imperfect state, and are only thoroughly understood, where what is signified by them is fully enjoyed.

The Character of the Persons here spoken
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ken of is full, & extensive, the *felicity* that awaits them at the end of their course is great and glorious, and the *Connection* that is between them is firm and certain, resulting from that divine *δικαιοσύνη* which is spoken of in the preceding part of the Context, that *righteous Judgment of God*, whereby he makes a true *Estimate* of Persons and actions according to the proper Rules of Judgment; and will therefore *render to every one according to his deeds*. And so with little variation, we may summe up the sense of the Words in this *Doctrinal Conclusion*, viz.

Doct. *That all they, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality, shall at last obtain the full possession of what they seek after in Eternal life.*

This is a Conclusion of that indubitable certainty, that the Truth of it cannot be call'd in question without denying at once the divine *veracity*, and *re-munerative justice*; for as much as the written word of God, (according to which his final distribution of *Eternal Rewards* and punishments, shall be made at the last day) hath expressly declared that it shall be thus: And that in many
other

other places of Scripture as well as in the Text: And therefore looking upon it as altogether needless to insist upon the *direct proof*, or Confirmation of this Truth, amongst those that do acknowledge the *divine Authority* of the Holy Scriptures, and believe them to be *the Word of God*: All that I shall do further in speaking to it, shall be, first to explain, and then to apply it to our selves on this sorrowful occasion.

In the *Explication* there are three things to be distinctly considered and spoken to, *viz.*

1. The Extensive import of the *Character*, by which the Heirs of future blessedness are here described.

2. The nature and Excellency of that *final happiness*, which doth by the divine Ordination and appointment belong to them as their *everlasting inheritance*.

3. What kind of *connection* there is between the one, and the other, *i. e.* between the *qualifications* imported in this *Character*, and that *felicity*, to which all that bear it shall at last be advanced.

I. That

I. That which doth most fitly come under our consideration in the first place, is the extensive import of their *Excellent Character*, who are here spoken of. And as in the general, we see they are described by the Spiritual, and Heavenly Tendency and scope of their desires and aims; which are too *high* to be confined to this *lower World*, or to take up their *Rest* in any thing, that is measured by *Time*: So more particularly, there are three things in this *Character* to be distinctly explained. 1. The great and Noble *Object* of their earnest *desire*, and constant *aim*, expressed here by *Glory*, *Honour*, and *Immortality*. 2. Their Souls *Actual Motion* towards this *Object*, here express'd by their *seeking* after it. 3. The regular *Way* and right *Line*, in which their desires move, and their aims are directed towards this blessed *Mark*; and that is a *patient continuance in well-doing*.

First, We may understand somewhat of the Excellency of the *Character* here given us, of the *Heirs of future Blessedness*, by considering the *Object* of their earnest *Desire*, and steady *Aim*; which indeed is *great and noble*, well-beseeming
the

the dignity of an heaven-born Soul, even *Glory*, and *Honour*, and *Immortality* (or as it is in the Greek, *incorruption*) [*Δόξα καὶ τιμὴ καὶ ἀφθαρσία*] three words that carry a great deal in them; the two first expressing the *substance* of what they seek after, *Glory* and *Honour*; and the third subjoyned, partly to set forth the perpetuity, and everlasting duration of both, and partly to denote their own endless *existence*, and continuance in the full possession and enjoyment of them, when once they shall have reached the *Mark* at which they aim.

I Shall neither trouble my self, nor you with a needless enquiry into the more nice and critical *distinctions*, that some may conceive to be between these two words, as to the proper import of them, [*Δόξα τιμὴ*] *Glory* and *Honour*: Thus much being sufficiently *evident*; not only from the third word, that is subjoyned to them, but also from the manifest scope of the *Text*; that they are principally designed both together to denote that *everlasting happiness* in another World, which is in the close of the verse summ'd up in those other two words, *Eternal life*; intimating that to be the *great thing*, which all the faithful

ful servants of God and Disciples of Christ do, in subordination to the *Glory* of their great Lord and Master, chiefly seek after. Yet so as not to exclude, from being a part of the Object of their Desire and Aim, whatsoever in *this life* is necessary as *preparative* and *introductory* to the *Glory* and *Happiness* of another : Much less excluding whatsoever else there may be in that *future blessedness* it self, which cannot so aptly be conceived of under the notions of *Glory* and *Honour*, especially if more strictly, and properly understood; such as that eternal *satisfaction*, that inexpressible *Joy*, and that inconceivable *delight*, which will undoubtedly accompany the *glory* and *honour* of that *immortal* state.

- 1 Pet. 5. 4. Nothing short of that *Crown of Glory*, that *fadeth not away*, can indeed ultimately terminate the Desires, or fully answer the Aims of the Persons of that singular and noble *Character*, which we are now considering. It is not any *worldly honour* or greatness, (tho' they should be advanced never so high in those *secular dignities*, which many are so ambitious to climb up unto) that can content them that seek the *honour*, which cometh from God only; even that which he who
- Joh. 5. v. 44. is

is the fountain of honour and glory, doth finally confer upon all his children when they are grown up to full age, and are put into the possession of that inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for them. And therefore these are here expressly mentioned in the Description, the Apostle gives us of them, as being what they do chiefly, and above all other things seek after. But tho' these be the supreme and ultimate objects of their Heavenly desires and aims, there are also other things to be considered as intermediate objects thereof; which they must be supposed likewise to seek after in a due subordination to the former. And indeed they are, in great part, but lower degrees of the same things. For as there must be some fainter Rays of an Heavenly divine Glory impress'd upon those Souls in this life by the sanctifying operations of the Spirit and Grace of God, which are to be more intirely glorified in that which is to come: So in proportion to the degree, wherein they partake of this glory, there is an heavenly Honour put upon all those here, who shall be advanced to eternal honour hereafter. Wheresoever the Divine

* Κληρονομία ἀφθάσθησιν.
1 Pet. 1.
v. 4.

B Image,

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Image, which was defaced by sin, comes to be restored by *Grace*, there is an *heavenly glory* put upon that Soul; which

2 Pet. 1. is therefore in Scripture called a *Divine*
 v. 4. *Nature*: And they that partake of it are

John 1. said to be *born of God*, and *born from above*. And as there is a *real internal glo-*
 v. 13. *ry* stamp'd upon the Soul, when the *di-*
 cap. 3. 3. *vine Image* comes to be re-impres'd up-
 1 Joh. 5. on it; so surely it is to be reckoned a
 v. 1. great *honour* to a Man to be related to God as his *Heavenly Father*, to be his *Son* not only *federally* by the grace of *Adoption*, but *really* by *Regeneration*. And these lower degrees of *Glory*, and *Honour* lead to higher, and so on to the highest of all, and consequently are to be *sought after* in subordination thereunto. And whosoever is regardless of the *former*, tho' his presumptuous pretences be never so high, cannot regularly seek the *latter*. And therefore we are by no means to separate the one from the other in considering the great *Object* of the sincere Christian's earnest *desire* and constant *aim*. Which was the first thing to be considered in this *descriptive Character* of the *Heirs* of future *blessedness*. And so

Secondly,

Secondly, That which comes in the next place to be spoken to is, their Souls *actual Motion* towards this great, and noble Object of their Desire and Aim, as it is here express'd by their **seeking after it.* And here it will be necessary to shew more particularly what this *seeking* doth import as it hath respect to this *Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*, as the object of it. And this will lead us one step further towards the right understanding the excellent, and comprehensive *Character* of the happy persons that are here spoken of. And it is easy for us to apprehend that there are some things necessarily *supposed*, and other things more directly *imply'd* in this *seeking for glory and honour and incorruption*, which ought to be considered distinctly; and therefore I shall give you a brief account of both.

* *Zntely
Est sum-
mo studio
quarere.*

First, There are some things to be considered, which it doth necessarily *suppose*, and they are such as these:

1. It doth suppose a competent measure of knowledge, and understanding of what is revealed in the Gospel concerning these *great things*, and the way in which they are to be *sought after*: Together with some hope that they may in *that*

*Ignoti
nulla cu-
pido.*

way be attained. For as there can be no Rational desire after that which we have no *knowledge* of; So a Man will seek but very faintly, if at all, after that which he hath little or no *hope* to obtain.

2. It doth further suppose a Mind and Heart so far abstracted and drawn off from the *World*, and its *perishing vanities*, as to be at the greater liberty, and leisure to pursue these *better*, and more *deserving Objects*. For it is not to be thought that a Soul that is so far carnalized, and sunk down into the *Earth* as to be either drowned, and dissolved in *sensual pleasures*, or swallowed up and buried alive in *worldly cares*, will with any serious earnestness seek after *spiritual* and *heavenly* things. And therefore the Apostle speaks of a Christians seeking those things, which are above, as a thing subsequent unto, as well as evidential of his being spiritually risen with Christ. And therefore

Col. 3: 1.

3. It doth also suppose the *divine efficacious grace* to have been at work upon the Soul, in some measure enlightening the *Mind*, renewing the *Will*, and spiritualizing the *Affections*; whereby the main bent of the Soul comes to be turned

turned towards God, whereas its depraved inclination did before carry it quite another way. For as it is not to be imagined that the Soul should with any seriousness *seek for glory, and honour, and immortality*, before such a *Change* is wrought in it: So it is certain that it could never work it in it self without the powerful supervening operation and assistance of the *Spirit and Grace* of God. And as these things are supposed; So

Secondly, There are other things more directly implied in this *seeking for glory, and honour, and immortality*. As

1. It doth imply a deliberate Judgment passed in the understanding upon sufficient conviction concerning the preferableness of these *great things* to all this *World's Enjoyments*, and an actual preferring and choosing the *one* before the *other* accordingly. For all that are engaged in a serious, and diligent prosecution of those things that conduce or pertain to their *eternal happiness* and *Salvation* in another World, have been taught, by the *Wisdom that is from above*, truly to reckon with themselves that, all those other things, upon which the minds of most men are so busily intent,

are but mean and contemptible Trifles compared with these: The *loving kindness of the Lord* is to them *better than life it self*, and therefore this is *sought after*, and prized by them above any of the *comforts of life*. To live in peace and sweet communion with God in Christ here, with the *lively hope of being ever with the Lord hereafter*, is to them, far more eligible, than to have the greatest affluence and abundance of this Worlds enjoyments. And therefore while others in the anxiety of their hearts are crying out, *Who will shew us any good?* They pray with the devout Psalmist, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*

Psal. 4.
v. 6.

2. It doth further imply an habitual *heavenly-mindedness*, whereby the main stream of the *thoughts and affections* is carryed in a steady current for the most part, towards *those things that are above*; which therefore are the Subject of their daily *meditation*: As there is nothing more natural to us than to be thinking much and often upon that which is the great Object of our desire and aim. And so they have *their conversation in Heaven*, even while their commoration and stay is yet upon earth.

phil. 3.
v. 20.

3. It

3. It doth further imply a strong-
emotion of ardent *desires*, and earnest
longings of Soul after those great and
glorious enjoyments, which constitute the
 happiness of the *future state*; and after
 whatsoever is antecedently necessary in
 order to their attainment of a gracious
Title unto, and *meetness* for them. *De-*
sire is that *Affection* of the Soul where-
 by it *moves* towards that, which is the
Object of its *Choice* and *Love*; as it *rests*
 in *Delight*, when it hath attained to the
 full possession of it. And therefore the
heavenly minded Christian in this im-
 perfect state, *not having yet attained*, is
 earnestly *reaching forth*, and *pressing for-*
 ward toward the *Mark* that is before
 him. And so there is nothing in which
 those Noble Souls, that are seriously en-
 gaged in *seeking for Glory, and Honour,*
and Immortality, do more frequently or
 intensely exercise themselves than in
 constant humble *Addresses unto God* by
 fervent Prayer for his Grace in Christ
 Jesus to *fit them for*, and conduct them
 through *present duty and service*, un-
 to eternal *Glory and Happiness*. And
 then.

Phil. 3.
 v. 13, 14.

4. It doth in the last place imply a
 serious diligence, and Conscientious

care in the use of all *divinely-prescribed* and appointed *means* for the improvement of their Spirits in all the excellent habits of *Grace and Holiness* here, in order to their being meetly prepared, and qualified in due time for the eternal enjoyment of *Glory and Happiness* hereafter; together with an humble dependance upon the divine Grace, implored by earnest Prayer, for the making all such *means* effectually conducive to their proper end.

Thirdly, That which we are to consider in the next place, respecting the excellent *Character* of these happy Persons, is the regular *Way* or right *Line*, in which their *Desires* move, and their *Aims* are directed towards this blessed Mark: and that is a *patient continuance in well-doing*, [*καὶ ὑπομονὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς.*] which the Vulgar Latine renders thus: [*secundum patientiam boni operis,*] according to the *patience of a good work*; or (to bring it nearer to the words of our Translation) by *patience in well-doing*. Arias Montanus renders it [*secundum permanentiam*] by *perseverance in well-doing*: and Beza Translates it [*secundum patientem expectationem*] by *patient expectation*. But I think our own Translation is the most full

full and emphatical of them all, putting that together which is severally express'd in them: Reading it thus; *by patient continuance in well-doing*; therefore I shall adhere to that; and so much the rather, because I find the word *ὑπομονή* doth in Scripture stile signify both *patience* and *perseverance*. And I think the Emphasis of it here cannot be better expressed than by putting them both together, and so understanding it to signify *patient continuance, or perseverance with patience in well-doing*. Nor do I see any thing in the more immediate context, or in the scope of the Text it self, to incline me to prefer any other Translation of these words, that I have seen before this which we have in our English Bibles. And therefore I shall follow in giving you a brief account of the way wherein the Heirs of future blessedness do seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, as it is here described, namely *by patient continuance in well-doing*. In which description of it, we may easily perceive these three gradations in it: *by well-doing*; *by continuance or perseverance in well-doing*; and *by patient continuance in well-doing*: All which I shall speak distinctly to in a few words, beginning

ginning with the *lowest degree*. first.
viz.

1. All that do regularly *seek for glory, and honour, and immortality*, seek them in the way of *well-doing*; which expression, being *indefinite*, is to be understood in a very large extent, reaching to all the Duties incumbent upon a Christian in this present state. For as this [*ἐργον ἀγαθόν* or] *well-doing* doth in the very formal notion of it carry a reference to some *Rule*, by which what is done is to be *measured*, and to which, so far as it is *well-done*, it doth accord: So it must be understood here to have a *special reference* unto the *Gospel*, or the *Law of Faith* as the *rule and measure* of it. And therefore this *well-doing* doth plainly import a *steady conformity* in a Man's Actions, as to the *main bent and course* of his conversation, unto the *holy precepts* of Christ Jesus lay'd down in the Gospel, as the *rule and standard* of a Christians deportment. And so that which is manifestly intended in this general expression, is no less than an *heedful attendance* to all the *duties of Christianity*; or a serious care & studious endeavour throughout the whole course of a Mans life to yield *obedience* to Col. 1. 10 the *Laws of Christ*, and so to *walk worthy*

of

of the Lord unto all pleasing. And being so understood, it is so far from excluding that *Faith in Christ*, whereby a sinner doth embrace and receive him according to the Offer of the Gospel, as the way to obtain Salvation by him, that it doth necessarily include it: Forasmuch as this *believing* is an essential part of that *well-doing*, by which all serious Christians do seek for glory, and honour, and immortality. And therefore our Lord himself doth emphatically call it [*τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ*] the work of God. It is by well-doing in this comprehensive sense as it takes in both *Faith* and *Good Works*, in conformity to the Precepts of the Gospel, that we must seek for eternal glory and happiness, if ever we would obtain it. And whosoever they be that seek it any other way, (either separating the one of these from the other, or carelessly neglecting and disregarding both;) they will find at last that they did herein miserably deceive themselves, and put a destructive Cheat upon their own Souls. For the Lord Jesus Christ is the Author of Eternal Salvation (not promiscuously unto all, but only) to all those that obey him: And therefore he himself also tells us, that not every one that saith unto him

Lord,

John 6.
v. 29.

Heb. 5.
v. 9.

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Mat. 7.
v. 21. *Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven.*

2. A further gradation express'd in this description of the only regular way of seeking for future glory and blessedness, is that it is to be done by continuance in well-doing, or by perseverance therein unto the end. And this is no less necessary than the former: For if any man draw back it will be to his own perdition, because God hath declared he will have no pleasure in him. He that would so run as to obtain, must not think it enough to set out right, to begin well; but he must hold on till he comes to the end of the prescribed course, or else he looſeth all. As he must be careful to run the very race that is set before him, keeping his feet in the direct path that is delineated for him by the divine Precepts, without turning aside to any crooked way, either on the right hand or on the left; So he must be sure to run to the end of it, not desisting till he arrive there, or else he will run in vain.

Heb. 10.
v. 38.

3. The last and highest gradation in this account that the Text gives of the way and manner of seeking regularly for glory, and honour, and immortality, is made by

by the addition of *patience* unto this *perseverance in well-doing*. And this *Patience* hath respect both to *present evils* endured, and to *future good* expected in the way of our duty. For *patience* is exercised by the Children of God in this state of their *minority* & *imperfection* both these ways, viz. *in enduring* and *in waiting*: & indeed in both respects they have need of *patience*, that after they have done the Will of God they may receive the promise.

First, All the *Heirs of Glory*, during the time of their *minority*, do stand in need of *patience* as it is to be exercised in *enduring* the many afflictive evils that they meet with in the course of their obedience and *continuance in well-doing*. For as Gods ancient People *Israel* passed through a troublesome, and howling *Wilderness* into the *promised Land*; So all True Christians must expect through much *tribulation* to enter into the *Kingdom of God*: And therefore our Lord *Jesus Christ* told his disciples, that in the *World* they should have *tribulation*. And indeed there is such a great variety of troubles, to which the best of men are exposed here in this life as may sufficiently convince them, that here is not their rest. But all these are quietly,

and

Heb. 10.
v. 36.

Acts 14.
v. 22.

John 16.
v. 33.

Mich. 2.
v. 10.

- and patiently undergone with a silent, humble, and meek *submission* to the divine Sovereign *disposing* hand that orders all, by such as have *eternal* glory in their eye and aim; insomuch that they do not only *persevere* in doing good with unwearied diligence, but also hold
- Col. 1. out in suffering evils with invincible patience, being *strengthened* thereunto according to the glorious power of the divine grace. Secondly, They do exercise patience in waiting as well as in enduring.
- Rom. 8. For (as the Apostle speaks) they hope
v. 25. for that which yet they see not, and therefore do with patience wait for it. And this is that kind of patience which the Apostle James exhorts unto. Jam. 5. 7, 8. Be patient therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord; behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and the latter rain: Be ye also patient, *stablish* your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draws nigh. And the right Seekers after Glory and happiness are no strangers to the exercise of this kind of patience. And therefore they are not weary in well-doing, because they know, that in due season they shall reap if they faint not, and that every thing
- Gal. 6.
v. 9. is

is most pleasant as well as most *beautiful in its season.* Eccl. 3. v. 11.

And thus have I shewn you at large the extensive import of the *Character* by which the *Heirs of future blessedness* are here described. And so I come more briefly

II. To consider in the next place the nature and excellency of that *final happiness*, which doth, by the *divine ordination* and *appointment*, belong to them as their everlasting inheritance; as it is here summ'd up in those two comprehensive words *Eternal Life*: Which contain more in them than all the united eloquence of men and Angels is able to express and set forth. It is a phrase more frequently than any other made use of in Scripture *summarily* to express the *great felicity*, to which the *glorified Saints* are advanced in the *heavenly Mansions*. And it doth very aptly serve to lead our Minds into some more general Conceptions of the *greatness* and *glory* of it; tho' indeed all that can be said or thought falls infinitely short of being *commensurate* unto it. Life is the sweetest of all enjoyments, and therefore that is the last thing that any man will

Job 2.
ver. 4.

will part with so long as he is able to retain it; and *Eternal life* is the *highest* and *most noble* kind of life, of which the nature of Man when in the *utmost elevation* is susceptible of. And the excellency of it will more clearly appear to us if we consider it more distinctly, first with respect to what is more directly *imported* in it, and then with respect to what it doth necessarily *connote*, when understood in that *latitude* in which the phrase is most frequently (if not always) used in Scripture.

1. If we consider it in the more direct import of it, so it appears to have a very *radiant excellency* in it that doth far out-shine the brightest part of *this Worlds glory*. For it must be understood to signify somewhat more than a *bare immortality* or a *meer living for ever*, (for that belongs also to *the wicked that are turned into Hell*, and hath no happiness in it if abstractly considered,) even, a *glorious ineffable and everlasting union with God*, the fountain of life; whereby the *Spirits of just men made perfect*, dwelling in God, the all-comprehending Spirit, do (so far as the *finite capacity* of a creature will admit) everlastingly possess a *perfect plenitude of life*. And this

this is elsewhere in Scripture express'd by *being ever with the Lord*. And this we are to conceive the Souls of the Saints to enter upon immediately after death, altho' their bodies are not to be advanced to a participation in it until the *resurrection*, when they also shall be made *immortal*, and *fashioned like unto Christs glorious Body*, according to the *working*, whereby he is able even to *subdue all things unto himself*. 1 Thes. 4 v. 17. Phil. 3 v. 21

2. If we consider this *Eternal life* with respect to what it doth necessarily connote, so it will appear to be still more *excellent* and *glorious*. For as that God in whom the glorified Saints have most intimately their *everlasting residence*, is in himself the *fountain of life*, or the *living God*; So he is also the *fountain of blessedness*. And therefore, as by *being for ever with the Lord*, they do everlastingly possess a perfect *plenitude of life*, in which every thing of *mortality* shall at last be *swallowed up*: So they must needs also enjoy together therewith a perfect *fulness* of whatsoever can be conceived of under the notion of *happiness*; a *fulness of Glory* both subjective and objective, glory shining in them, and glory shining upon, and round about, yea into them.

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them, transfusing its bright beams through them; a fulness of honour infinitely transcending all those fading Titles, which advance one man so high above another in this lower World; and a fulness of joy, satisfaction and delight, even those pure, refined pleasures that are at Gods right hand for evermore. All this, and a great deal more that neither our words nor thoughts can reach, is summarily comprehended in that *Eternal Life*, which all they shall certainly attain at the end of their course, who by patient continuance in well-doing do seek for glory, and honour, and immortality.

Which will more plainly appear to us by considering that which follows in the next place in order, namely :

. III. That which remains in the last place to be spoken to, is, *the connection* between the qualifications imported in the foregoing *Character* and that *glorious felicity*, unto which all that bear it shall at last be advanced; between a *Christians course* and his *crown*; between his *seeking for glory, and honour, and immortality*, in the way here described, and that *eternal life*, in which he shall finally enjoy all that he sought for. That there is a connection

connection between them is sufficiently evident, inasmuch as *the one* is attainable no other way but *by the other* : And of what kind this connection is, I am now to shew. And in short, It is easie for us to apprehend that this connection is not *natural* and *necessary*, but *ordinate*, not such as doth *necessarily* result from the *nature* of the things themselves that are here connected, but such as hath its foundation in the *gracious ordination* and *appointment* of God. For it is sufficiently evident to any one, that doth attentively and seriously consider it, That there is no *just* and *adequate proportion* between the most diligent and industrious Christians *present service*, and his *future eternal reward*. And so it is no less obvious for us to conceive that the connection that is between them is not founded in *Merit*, but in *Free Grace*. For when we have done all, we must say we are unprofitable Servants, we have done only that which was our duty to do. And it is most absurd for any one to think to merit any thing by the payment of a *just Debt*. And therefore the Scripture speaks of *eternal life* under the notion of a *Gift*, as obtained only by the *free donation* of God, and not as a possessi-

Luk. 17.
v. 10.

on accruing to us by any *desert* of our own; whereas, on the other hand, that *eternal death*, which is the just punishment of Sin is called *Wages*, as being no more than what it doth most justly *deserve*. Rom. 6. 23. *For the Wages of Sin is death: But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And so the *Reward of the eternal inheritance* is several times in Scripture under the Title of *Mercy*: As the Apostle prayed for Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. 1. 18. *The Lord grant unto him that he may find Mercy of the Lord at that day.* And so we are exhorted to *keep our selves in the love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* And therefore it is manifest that the connection that is between the Christians *service* and *reward*, his *Course* and his *Crown*, is not founded in *merit*, but in the *free Grace* and *undeserved Love* of God in Christ; to which alone that *gracious Promise* or *Covenant* is intirely owing, whereby he hath been pleased to establish an *immutable order* between them, so as that the one shall be *infallibly consequent* upon the other.

But the connection is never the *less firm* or *certain* for being so founded as it
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Jude v.
21.

it is, but rather the *more* so ; For the *Covenant of Grace*, which is the more immediate ground and foundation of it, is an *everlasting Covenant*, a covenant not only *ordered in all things*, but also *sure* : ^{2 Sam. 23 v. 5.} Forasmuch as the *divine eternal veracity* is engaged to make good every *Article* of it to as many as have regularly laid hold upon it, and by an hearty compliance with its *conditions* come to have a *real interest* in it. For altho^g. God was unlimitedly free before he made the promise, and established his Gracious Covenant with us ; yet that being once done, he is obliged, for the honour of his *Truth* and *Righteousness*, to make it good. And so though in strictness he can owe nothing to us, he is a *Debtor* to his own *Promise*. And at the last day he will be glorified not only as the free and magnificent *Donor* of all the *Treasures of Heaven*, but also as the *God of Truth* in fulfilling all the *exceeding great and precious Promises* that he hath made unto his faithful Servants. ^{2 Pet. 1: v. 4.} And therefore *Unto them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality*, he will not fail to render *eternal Life*.

And having thus, with as much bre-

vity as the Subject could well admit, finished what I proposed to speak doctrinally from this Text of Scripture; All that now remains, is to make some *application* of what hath been said, unto our selves. And

1. From hence we learn with what *magnanimity* and nobleness of Spirit true living Christianity doth inspire those in whom it takes place; elevating and raising their minds and hearts above this perishing World, and all its fading transitory enjoyments: Steadily inclining them *to seek those things that are above*; insomuch that nothing lower than *heavenly glory* and *immortal honour* can now content them, or compose their Desires into a complacential Rest and satisfaction. While others, that are acted by the sordid abject and base *Spirit of this World*, lie groveling in the dust of this earth, drudging and toying for what is only accommodate unto their mortal part; the living Christian, *being made alive to God through Jesus Christ his Lord*, and *having received not the Spirit of this World, but the Spirit that is from God*, is continually aspiring upwards in heavenly thoughts, desires and aims, ever *seeking for glory*,
and
- Col. 3.
v. 1.
- Rom. 6.
v. 11.
- 1 Cor. 2.
v. 12.

and honour, and immortality, till he comes to the actual fruition of all in eternal life.

2. What hath been said may serve also to discover to us the *preposterous folly* of their presumptuous hopes, who think at last to obtain *eternal life*, tho' they take no care to seek it in that way which the Gospel doth prescribe, and in which only it is to be found, even by a *patient continuance in well-doing*. Heaven and eternal happiness are promised to none as an *absolute irrelative Gift*, but as a *Reward* consequent upon *service*; And therefore whosoever are careless and unconcerned about the *duty and service* of the present state, will be sure to fall short of the *glory and felicity* of the future: And then the higher their presumptuous and groundless hopes have been raised, the greater will their shame and disappointment be when they and their hopes shall perish together.

3. The firm and certain connection which the gracious *Promise* and *Covenant* of God hath made and settled between a *patient continuance in well-doing* here, and the enjoyment of *eternal life* hereafter, may further serve for the

comfort and encouragement of all his sincere and faithful Servants under all the difficulties and hardships, afflictions and sorrows, exercises and Tryals, which they undergo here in the course of their obedience. He that hath obtained a clear prospect by faith of the invisible World, and of the *glory, honour* and *incorruption*, which are to be *eternally* enjoyed there by all that regularly *seek after* them here; and is withal conscious to himself that he is one of that happy number, can easily see through the darkest cloud, and discern a comfortable end of all his present troubles. And therefore his *Faith* mightily animating his *Hope*, and his *Hope* proportionably strengthening his *Patience*, he doth not *faint in the day of Adversity*, nor is he weary of well-doing; because he is sufficiently assured that *the time is short*, and so that it will be but yet a little while before *all Tears* shall be *wiped away from his eyes*, and all grief and sorrow banished from his heart, and endless Joyes succeed in their room.

Prov. 24.
v. 10.

Isa. 25.
v. 8.

Rev. 7.
v. 17.

4. The same consideration may serve as a sweet and comfortable allay to the sorrows of such as are mourning for the death

death of such of their near and dear Relatives or Friends, who in their lifetime gave sufficient proof of their exemplary care and diligence to persevere in such a steady course of duty and obedience as hath eternal life and glory connected with it. It is indeed very selfish and unbecoming our Christian hope with immoderate and unallayed grief and sorrow to lament the death of such : Forasmuch as altho' their *absence*, and departure from us be very sensibly our great *loss*, their *presence with the Lord* is in an infinitely higher degree their *gain*. And therefore methinks even natural affection, which makes us wish well to our dear Relatives, especially when sanctified by Grace and assisted by faith, should give some check to our immoderate grief for the Removal of such of them from us by the stroke of death, concerning whom we have such comfortable and well-grounded hopes. For why should we grieve at or regret their happy advancement unto that *immortal glory and honour* which they had been long *seeking for*, but could never reach before?

5. What we have heard, may serve both for our direction and excitation un-

to such a regular and steady course of obedience here, that we may all obtain *eternal life* hereafter. Let us endeavour therefore to have that *Truth*, which hath been this day suggested to us out of the Word of God, so deeply impress'd upon our very hearts, that the thoughts of it may continually dwell with us, and have a constant influence upon us, by the grace of God, for the engaging us to the most strenuous diligence and constancy in prosecuting our *present duty*, as that which hath by the divine ordination and appointment a direct tendency to our *future eternal felicity*; Let us never forget that the only way to *glory* and *honour*, and a blessed *immortality*, is a *patient continuance in well-doing*. And so let none of us any longer indulge our selves in the neglect of that upon which our eternal welfare doth so evidently depend; but let the time past suffice us to have wrought the *Wills of the Flesh*, and to have misemployed the active strength and vigour of our Souls in *minding only earthly things*. And now let us resolve, by the grace of God, to call off our hearts and affections from this lower World, and all its perishing vanities, and so set
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our selves in good earnest to *seek those things that are above* : Minding the great Duties of Christianity with a more serious care than ever we have hitherto exercised about them : Making *True practical Religion* more our business, as it is what will turn to the best account unto us at last : O let none of us be guilty of such preposterous folly in the great concernments of our immortal Souls, as we would be ashamed of in the management of our secular affairs, separating the *Way* from the *End*, as if the one might be attained without a serious and due attendance to the other. The *Way* in which we must seek for future *glory* and happiness, if ever we would have it, is plainly delineated to us in the *Text* : And all those that are gone before us, and have actually received *the Reward of the eternal inheritance*, both sought and obtained it in this way and no other, even *by a patient continuance in well-doing*. It doth therefore concern us to tread in their steps, that we also may in due time, and in our appointed order come to the fruition of the same happiness with them. And so my earnest exhortation to you is in the words
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of the Apostle, Heb. 6. 11, 12. *That every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

And here for your further excitation I shall now, on this solemn occasion, set before you the illustrious and worthy Example of our *deservedly honoured, and lately deceased Friend*, whose immortal part is now with Christ. For She was indeed One upon whose Heart and Life the divine Spirit and Grace had in most conspicuous and shining lineaments drawn that *excellent and noble Character*, by which the Heirs of Blessedness are described in the Text; And to that in the several parts of it I shall principally confine my self in the following Account that I shall give you of her: Wherein my more immediate design and aim is to shew you how eminently this Text of Scripture was exemplified in her; that you may thence be the more confirmed in your comfortable and well-grounded assurance of her being now happily possessed of that *Eternal Life*, which by the divine designation and appointment belongs to all
that

that bear that Character. And therefore not to say any thing of her *natural* endowments, either intellectual or moral, altho' they were such as made the Grace of God to shine with the greater lustre in her discreet and well-ordered conversation; I shall speak only to those that were manifestly *divine* and *supernatural*. And for as much as my happy acquaintance with her did commence *too late* to capacitate me to give you any particular account of the more early impressions of the Divine Grace upon her Soul, or the more distant Passages of her pious Life; and that I may keep my self as remote as may be from all suspicion of *flattery* and *falsehood* in the payment of this my last solemn Respect unto her Memory: I shall only speak of what I have had the peculiar advantage of observing my self for the space of almost seven years that I have (in two distinct periods) lived in her Family. And I must have been very inobservant indeed if in all that time I had not taken notice of what was so visible both in her habitual Temper and constant carriage exactly answering to every part of that *descriptive Character* of the true Christian,

stian, which I have been this day unfolding to you; of which I shall give you a distinct and impartial account in the following Particulars. And

1. Her *habitual heavenly-mindedness* was such a shining Excellency in her as could not be hid under that Vaile of *Humility* and *Modesty* which was her constant *ornament*; but did discover it self in an holy *contempt* of this lower World and all its perishing Enjoyments, in a *steady Aim* directed unto higher and more noble Objects, and in a continual *aspiration* after *glory*, and *honour*, and *immortality*. The divine Grace had inspired her with that true magnanimity and nobleness of Spirit, that her *Desires* and *Hopes* could by no means be confined within the narrow limits of *Time*, nor be long together held down to sublunary and *terrene* objects: And therefore her Soul would be often mounting upward upon the Wings of Faith into the bright Regions of light and glory above to contemplate the eternal and glorious Objects that are there; And more especially toward the end of her Time, having been observed for some months before her Death to have her thoughts much exercised about the State

State and Enjoyments of Heaven: And particularly about separate Souls mutual knowledge of and converse with one another; taking occasion very frequently to discourse upon that *sublime Subject*, when in company with such as she apprehended might be assistant to her in her endeavours to attain more distinct and clear notions about it. Of which she now understands more than any one here could tell her.

2. The earnestness of her *desires* after heavenly *glory* and *felicity* was no less conspicuous than the steadiness of her *Aims* principally directed that way. She did not only set this *glory, honour and immortality* before her as the great *Mark* at which she aimed, but was continually *pressing forwards toward it*, seeking after these things with the most close and strenuous *application of mind*. And that more especially in *fervent prayer*, wherein she was wont to breath out her very Soul to God every day: For as her natural Temper inclined her to the love of *Solitude*, so Grace had taught her to make the best improvement of her *Solitary hours*, which she was careful to employ not only in diligent reading and devout meditation,
but

but especially in *secret prayer* ; whereby she maintained and kept up a continual *commerce* with Heaven, which many a time brought her in very rich *Returns* in divine communications and manifestations. Nor was she content to seek alone for such great things as *Grace* and *Glory* are ; and therefore would often with earnest importunity bespeak the joint-assistance of her more intimate Christian-friends, and especially of such Ministers of her acquaintance as she could be most free with, in managing this work ; that so her Addresses to God might be the more solemn by others assisting her therein, and Dedicating several hours together unto that sacred service, as hath been frequently done at her Request, and principally upon her account in her own house.

3. She was no less careful about the regular way of *seeking for glory, and honour, and immortality*, than she was earnest and zealous in the *work* it self. For she was better instructed in the great Doctrines and Duties of Christianity, and in the Method of obtaining Salvation by Jesus Christ, as it is revealed in the Gospel, than to separate the

the *Way* from the *End*, or foolishly to think of attaining the *one* without an heedful walking in the *other*. And therefore it was her daily Study and sincere Endeavour in every thing to walk by rule; not abusing the *Grace* of the Gospel as an encouragement to *licentiousness*, but learning from it to deny all *ungodliness* and *wordly lusts*, and to live *soberly, righteously and godly in this present World*; so looking for that blessed hope, &c. Labouring to have her conversation such in all respects as might become the Gospel; and her behaviour answerable to her hope. And therefore it was her conscientious care, and earnest endeavour to be seriously diligent and constant in performing all the Duties of a Christian, both in her *personal* and *relative* capacities. And whereas in the latter she sometimes found some *difficulties* (under such concurrent circumstances as need not be mentioned) which did unavoidably discover such of her *Infirmities* as otherwise might have been hid: I have this to add from certain knowledge, that they were by *none* more deeply resented, or more sadly bewailed than by *her self*. For when at any time, upon some slender

Tit. 2.

v. 11, 12.

& 13.

Phil. 1.

v. 27.

provocation, the *natural quickness* of her Temper did on a suddain betray and hurry her into some more hasty, passionate or indecent expressions, they were soon followed with such an *indignation* against her self as did more than bear proportion thereunto, and therefore might very justly (as I doubt not but it did in a great measure) make atonement for them unto such as were most nearly and sensibly touched by them. All which I should have passed over in silence, had I not considered that what I have mentioned on the *one part* might perhaps have been observed by many, unto whom what is said on the *other*, in her just vindication, may be altogether unknown. And what I have thus impartially hinted amounting to sufficient evidence that her Infirmities of this kind were no other than were very well consistent with sincerity and a good *conscience both toward God and toward Man*; I must after all in justice to her Memory give her this general Character, (which all that knew her more intimately will say she justly deserved :) *That she was a loving, discreet and prudent Wife, a careful, affectionate and tender-hearted Mother, a faithful*

ful compassionate and beneficent friend; and, in all these respects and many more, a most exemplary Christian. And then.

4. To complete the Character, her *Patience* and *Perseverance* were no less eminent than her *care* and *diligence*, in *well-doing*. She was not only unweariedly active and constant in *doing*, but eminently submissive and patient in *suffering the Will of her heavenly Father*. And therefore under all her painful and frequently renewed Exercises and Tryals, which indeed were very grievous, (especially for the last twelve Months of her Life,) she did with unrepining submission, and as much chearfulness as was consistent with her acute pains, bow to the *Sovereign disposing hand* of God; resigning her Will to his so as never to have been heard all the time to charge him foolishly in any the least murmuring complaint against him under what in his paternal wisdom he saw meet to lay upon her. Yea in the very midst of her weariness and pain when her eyes have been held waking, and her sleep hath fled from her, she would often express the grateful sense which she had of the singular *Mercy* of God towards her,

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in the many instances wherein it pleased him to intermix it with her *Affliction*: Considering how much better it was with her, under her severest exercises, than with many others of Gods dear Children, who, by reason of their mean Circumstances in the World, could not be furnish'd with those external helps & accomodations, which by the distinguishing Goodness of God she enjoyed. Which she would often speak of with great compassion to others, and no less thankfulness to God upon her own account; and especially in the late cold and pinching season, wherein such were exposed to very great hardship as had sickness added to poverty. And thus the excellent *Character*, that the Apostle gives us of the Heirs of Heaven in the Text, was in every part of it eminently found in her; who was indeed One who by patient continuance in well-doing sought for glory and honour and immortality. And then I may add, That,

5. Agreeably hereunto her *Faith* and *Hope* were for the most part strong and lively, (except at such times as she was under clouds of *Melancholly* arising from bodily distemper, which made all things look dark unto her while it prevailed)

But

But most perceptibly did she improve in their strength and vigour for some months before the expiration of her Time; whereby she did not only obtain a comfortable victory in a great degree over the *Fear of Death*, which had formerly been a very grievous exercise unto her: but was also greatly supported and encouraged under her continued remaining *Troubles of Life*. For as there were many comfortable *Words* in the Holy Scriptures whereon God had caused her to hope, so by strengthening and encreasing her *Faith*, he enabled her more closely to apply them to her self, and so to take the comfort of them when she needed it most. As under one of the last Returns of her Distempers, she did very frequently revolve in her mind those words of afflicted but believing *Job*, Chap. 23. v. 10. *When he hath tryed me I shall come forth as gold*: And God inabling her to mix that word with faith, made it both at that time and afterwards very useful to her. And so in her last sickness, even the night before her death, after she had been exercised with grievous pain the whole night and day preceding, having a short interval of ease for a few moments while I was with her,

I observed her to repeat unto her self several times with great complacency (as I apprehended from the pleasant tone of her voice tho' but low) those encouraging words of the devout Psalmist, *Psal.* 42. 8. *The Lord will command his loving kindness in the day-time, and in the night his Song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life:* Adding in the close, *Lord, thou art the God of my life, natural life, spiritual life, yea eternal life; and therefore my prayer is unto thee,* After which her pain and sickness again returning, she grew more and more apprehensive of her near approaching dissolution; and after a short space said to me, as I stood by her bed-side, *I have a dark valley to pass through:* Whereupon encouraging her to hope in God, I said to her, *The Father of lights will be with you there, and he will enlighten your darkness;* to which she very sweetly replied, *and turn the shadow of Death into the morning.* And not long after she spake to me (in these or the like words) *I bless God I do not at all doubt my eternal Interest, but it is some trouble to me that I have yet so little of the Joy of Gods Salvation:* As at another time (which whether

ther it were before or after the former (I do not exactly remember) she said with some apparent Concern to a dear Friend standing by, *What! Come so near to the confines of a glorious eternity, and yet have no clearer prospect of the glory of it!* But altho' that *unspeakable and glorious Joy*, which doth sometimes attend the lively exercises of Faith in the children of God in their last hours, was (as you may perceive by these hints) withheld from her; She was not without Solid and great *peace in believing*; which of the two the more *substantial* tho' not the more *delectable* enjoyment: And I make no question but that now she hath the other also in a better way as well as in a greater proportion than ever any had it in this World, even *fulness of Joy in the divine presence, and pleasures for evermore*. For *faith and patience* having both had *their perfect work* in her, she is now gone to *inherit the promises in Eternal Life*.

And now, my Christian Friends, the greatest honour and respect that we can pay to her *blessed Memory* (which I hope will yet live among us) is to follow her *Worthy Example*, every one *seeking for glory and honour and immortality* in that way

way wherein she fought and hath now obtained all. Let me therefore earnestly recommend this unto you all; (as I desire also to charge it upon my self) And more especially to you her nearest surviving Relatives, who had a greater advantage than any others by your nearness to her most exemplary course of life as an excellent pattern for you to imitate. And therefore as she hath done worthily in serving God and her Generation according to his Will, and now rests from her labours in that everlasting Sabbathism which remaineth for the People of God; (into which she entred on the close of that day of the week, which is not unfitly called by us the Christian Sabbath.) Let it be your care every one to do likewise.

Rev. 14.
v. 13.
Heb. 4.
v. 9.

And more particularly let me address my self unto you her hopeful Off-spring, her dear Children (for whom she put up many a Prayer to God that he would make you all his Children.) And let me earnestly exhort you never to forget what a Mother you had; what excellent instruction and wholesome counsel she often gave you; and what a teaching Example she set before you, by which being now dead she yet speaks to you:
And

And surely it is your great Concern, as you love your souls, to hearken to the *Voice* & to understand the *Language* of it. There are some things which Actions do speak out louder than any Verbal Expressions; and certainly if you have the heart attentively to consider and understand it, you cannot be unapprehensive that your Mothers Example calls aloud upon you all to mind the great Concernments of your Souls with serious care and diligence as she did; to get your thoughts and affections abstracted and drawn off from this World, and fixedly *set upon things above*, as hers were; to be diligent and industrious in the careful and conscientious performance of all Christian Duties, both relative and personal, as she was; to be constant and serious in attending upon Ordinances, there seeking the appointed food of your Souls, where she both often sought and found it; to dedicate some part of your Pretious Time every day to reading the Scriptures and other good Books, devout Meditation, and secret Prayer, which you know was her constant Course as long as her health and strength would permit; in a word, to make serious Religion your main business, as it was most manifestly hers:
And

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And if you will hearken to this Call in conjunction with the Calls of G O D's Word, and that Monitory Providence that you are now under, so as heedfully to tread in your pious Mothers steps, as *Dear Children* following her in those things wherein she was a *follower of God*, and persisting in this Course to the end of your Life: Then let me tell you for your Comfort, that altho' Death hath at present made a separation between her and you, it shall be but for a short season; and then you shall again live together in the glorious and bright Mansions of Heaven, and in the beatifick Vision and Fruition of God and Christ, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.



A Funeral Sermon.

By Robert Fleming, V. D. M.
Preach'd in the Afternoon.

Ecclef. vii. 1.

— Better is *the Day of Death,*
than the Day of ones Birth.

AS all the *Faculties* of *Mans Soul* are become miserably depraved and corrupted by reason of *Sin* : So in particu-
lar the leading and directive Faculty, the *Mind* or *Intellect* is signally so. For besides the *blindness* and ignorance of men in things *natural*, there is nothing more apparent, than that universal *darkness* and stupidity which they are under, as to their apprehensions of things *spiritual* and *eternal*. For altho' there seems to be remanent upon the minds of all men naturally some *Kōiyas épyōas* or imperfect

perfect *rudera* of the true impressions of good and evil, and some secret Perswasions of a *sovereign Being*, to which all things owe their *original* and *continuance*; yet alas, what sad Conceptions do men entertain of things of an immaterial and spiritual nature; as appears not only from the *Writings* of the more learned and ingenious *Heathens*, but from innumerable and dayly *Instances* even in the midst of the Meridian Light of the Gospel: So that constant *Experience* doth, in this matter, sufficiently confirm *Scripture-Testimony*, that *the natural man knows not the things of the Spirit of God*, as requiring a *subjective* as well as *objective spiritual Light* to discern them by.

However, this is one of God's *ends* in *Revealing* his *Word* to us, that we may (thorow his Blessing upon pains and industry) attain to *rectified Notions and Ideas* of things so excellent in themselves, and so momentous to be rightly known by us. And, as this is the *scope* of the whole *Scripture*, to bring *Life and Immortality* to *Light* unto us; so particularly of this *Book* of the wise and inquisitive *Solomon*; who having undertaken a *speculative Journey* into all the *Regions* of *sublunary Enjoyments*, returns an experi-
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enced *Ecclesiastes* or *Preachers* of those things that he thought might be of universal use to be known. And therefore having rubbed off the *fine Varnish* and *gaudy Paint* of *Earthly Objects*, (with which they insinuate themselves at first view as beautified to our vain *imiginations*;) he here represents them impartially to our *Reason*, as they are in their own natures and usefulness to us.

Of this we might adduce many *instances*, if need were: But we go no farther than the Words before us; wherein we may observe a Rectification of a two-fold *Mistake*, that we are apt to fall into. For, first, whereas men usually prefer *Riches* to a good *Name*; we are here instructed that a *good Name* is better, & more valuable, *than precious ointment*, i. e. than the *fatness* of the world, and the affluence of all earthly wealth and riches. For thus I take the word, according to *Prov. 22. 1.* (which seems to be a comment on this, or a plain account of what is here figuratively imported) For *precious ointment* was esteemed of old amongst the most valuable things of the *Treasures* of *Princes*, as we see *Isa. 39. 2.* And hence it is, that *Prov. 15. 30.* A good name is said to make the bones fat. And,

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And, again, whereas Men generally prefer *Life* to *Death*; *Solomon* here tells us, that we are greatly mistaken in the *Case*; for, that, upon the contrary, *the day of Death* is much to be prefer'd to *the day of ones Birth*. According to which *Position*, he goes on to shew that the house of *Mourning* is better than the house of *Feasting*, and *sorrow* preferable to *Laughter*, v. 2, 3, &c.

It is the *second* of these only, that I am directed to consider at this time, viz.

That the day of Death is better than the day of ones Birth.

A strange *Paradox*! and enough to amaze the minds and thoughts of all such as mind earthly things, and who have not attained to have their interior *Senses* spiritually exercised to discern spiritual things. Nay I am apt to think, that many even serious *Christians* may find it difficult to reconcile their thoughts to this *Doctrine*. And therefore, on all hands, I foresee *Objections*.

What! (will the *Atheist* and *Anti-scripturist* say) is it better not to be than to be?

Is it possible (will the carnal *Philosopher* and *Rationalist* object) that the
destruction

destruction of nature it self should be preferable to its *Being* and *Continuance*.

Nay even many *poor Christians* will be ready to tell me ; that it seems very strange to them to prefer *Death*, which owes its Original to Sin, and is *our enemy*, and the *last to be destroyed*, to prefer (I say) this to *Life* it self, wherein we have opportunity to serve God, and do good to our selves and others.

And methinks I hear a multitude cry out at the hearing of this (and many such *Worldlings* there are) What ! Death better than Life : Here's strange Doctrine indeed ! What ! Leave all our *Earthly Comforts*, Friends and Possessions ; and that for Death and the Grave : who can have Faith to believe such Doctrine as this ?

Well *Friends*, here's that which may silence all your *Doubts*, and answer all your *Questions* as to this matter, if you will give ear to God himself ; that Death is preferable to Birth. But I must supersede the satisfying you, as to your particular *Scruples* in this matter, till I shall have come to the *Improvement* of the *Doctrine*, which I must now (lest I act pre-
post-

posterously) previously inquire into.

And here, though the Words are in themselves so very plain, that I see no momentous Variation among *Criticks* in the translating of them : Yet I find some considerable difference in the Sentiments of *Expositors*, as to the meaning of them. For some understand the Text of all Mankind, with respect only to this *present Life*, laying aside all Consideration of the *future State* ; as many Passages in this Book are undoubtedly to be understood. And if so, then the meaning only is ; That if *We consider the Vanities and Miseries of Mankind in this World (abstracting from the future)* it is better to go out of it by *Death*, than come into it by *Birth*.

But others understand it rather, as *speci-ally* referring to the death of good men, who are thereby not only freed from troubles here, but *instated* in true happiness & felicity hereafter. And this sense, as it appears more consonant to the tenour of *Scripture Truth and Phraseology* ; so likewise seems not obscurely to be hinted here, from its close connexion with the preceding part of the *Verse*. For it is the death of *him* that has a *good Name*, that seems to be here spoken of, and whose

Death

Death is justly preferred to his Birth: For a good Name does unquestionably *suppose* true worth and vertue, as its *Foundation* and Basis. And tho' the Epithet of *good* be not expressed in the Hebrew, but simply *a name*, which is preferred to *precious ointment*: Yet that is so far from lessening the sense, that it expresses it with the greater Emphasis; as insinuating, that wicked men have *no name at all*, properly speaking.

It is chiefly in this *sense*, that I conceive the proper meaning and scope of the words to lye; tho' I would not totally exclude the *former*, by reason of the largeness of the expression: for I think Scripture is to be understood in the largest sense, where the words and scope will naturally bear it, without contorsion and straining. And therefore the *Doctrinal Proposition* that I here lay down, as the *foundation* of my ensuing *Discourse*, is this;

That as the day of Death is preferable to the day of ones Birth, with respect to all; when the parallel is only in reference to this Life, considered as miserable, abstracting

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..stracting from the Future: So far more is the day of death preferable to the day of ones Birth, with respect to the Saints; when the parallel is not only in reference to This Life, but inclusive also of the Future.

In which General Proposition, as we may see *both senses* of the Text *conjoynd*, as being no way opposite, dissonant, or exclusive the one of the other: So we may observe them *so conjoynd*, as notwithstanding to remain *Distinct*. And therefore we must of necessity disjoyn them again in order to a distinct handling. And though it is the *second sense* of the words, that I principally intend to consider and prosecute: Yet, since it may be of use to premise some *brief Reflection* upon the *former*; I shall therefore distinctly and apart propose both senses in *two Propositions*; which are nothing else but the *two parts* of the preceding General Doctrine.

First Proposition.

The Day of Death is preferable to the Day of ones Birth, with respect to All; when the parallel is only in reference to this Life, considered

sidered as miserable, abstracting from the Future.

I suppose there is none that considerately and seriously ponders this Proposition, but will easily assent unto it ; since I do not here *barely* and *nakedly* reflect on the *notions* of Birth & Death *in themselves*, with respect to *Life simply considered* ; but only draw the parallel between them with respect to *Life as miserable*, or (to speak plainly) with respect to *the miserys of Life*. And I suppose none can duely consider this ; but must instantly be enforced to prefer the *exit* from *Misery*, to the *intrat* into it : Which is all that, (according to this sense of the Text,) is understood by *Death and Birth*.

For let us but suppose, that we were under a necessity to go a dangerous, tedious and afflictive *Journey*, wherein we were to encounter with all manner of *Miseries*, pains and troubles ; and it were then proposed to us, *Whether we did not prefer the End and Close of it, to the Beginning of it, and our Entry upon it ?* I reasonably conclude (abstracting from all consideration of the *place* whether that *Journey* might lead us,) that

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our Answer would be in the *Affirmative*; from the Melancholly Idea and Representation of such a *Journey*.

And now, what else is our *Life*, in this Miserable world, but such a tedious and afflictive *Peregrination*: For we are born to trouble, as the sparks flie upward. No sooner do we enter by *birth* into the *Society* of the *Living*, but our *Infant Crys* and *Tears* become a *sad prelude* to a succeeding *sorrowful scene*. Our *Childhood* and *Youth* are wholly *vanity*, and spent in such a way, as we seem rather to *breath* than *live*: And our propensity then to extravagancy and sin oblige our best *Friends* to keep us under the *Pedagogy* of *necessary*, tho' to us *afflictive*, *Correction*. And when ever we arrive to something of further *Maturity* and judgment, we are immediately beset with cares and incumberances, the inseparable *Companions* of worldly *Business*: Then do our hearts run out impetuously after the *Trifles* of time, the nick-nam'd *Honours*, *Profits* and *Pleasures* thereof; the *Game* which *Ambitious*, *Covetous* and *Wanton Spirits* flie at. The fine *varnish* and gaudy *shew* of *guilted dross* and *dung* takes us; and after it are our endeavours bent. Here,

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cares to get this worlds dross, cares to keep it, cares to encrease it, and cares to dispose of it, eat out the best part of our little time. And yet (notwithstanding our rising up early, sitting up late and eating the bread of sorrows,) the defectiveness of the creature, and its transitoriness, thwarts our hopes and expectations. Besides, that oft a secret curse from God, blasts our endeavours, and breaks our measures in all that we do. Riches and Estates take to themselves wings and flie away as an Eagle towards Heaven, to receive a new disposal : And the fair image and shadow of Honour, Grandeur and Pleasure passeth away and leaves our minds perplexed and troubled for the disappointment. Thus do we seek for the living among the dead, and satisfaction and contentment where it is not to be found. Distance and separation from our best Friends eat out the seeming comfort we might enjoy in their company. Wants, pains, sickness, sorrows, fears and disappointments swallow up any little pleasure that we meet with in the world, and drown the sense of enjoyments otherwise comfortable. And besides all these things that happen to our selves immediately ; we are oftimes cal-

led to be sad *spectators* of the many *Tragedies* acted in the world. We see *National and Church Calamities, and Family and Personal Distresses*: And oft-times the nearness of our Relation to others obliges us, by something more than *Sympathy*, to suffer with them.

And now, all these things being impartially reflected on; if we return with *Solomon* (ch. 4. 1, 2, 3.) and consider the oppressions that are done under the sun, and how destitute, not only the Oppressed, but the Oppressors also, are of True comfort, on that account: I say, considering these things we may see ground with him to praise the Dead, rather than the Living; yea to conclude that better is he than both these, who hath not yet been, because he hath not seen the evil work which is done under the sun.

Object. How can we prefer Death to Birth and consequently to Life? Since even *Solomon* himself ch. 9. v. 4, 5. Doth plainly give the preference to Life; for a living Dog is better (says he) than a Dead Lion, &c.

Ans. It is not strange or uncommon, for one and the same thing to come under different considerations at some times: And when it does so, it may be very

very proper accordingly to deduce quite different, yea and opposite, conclusions from thence. And therefore it needs not seem strange that *Solomon* speaks of *Life*, in ch. 9. in another *Dialect*, than he does here in my *Text*: Since he reflects here and there upon the same things under quite different *considerations*. For 1. in ch. 9. he compares *Life* and *Death* in their own *natures*; and therefore hath all the reason in the world to give the preference to *Life*, as being so illustrious an effect of divine Wisdom and Power. But here *Solomon*, doth not compare these Opposites *in themselves*, but in an *accidental consideration* only, with reference to the troubles and miseries our Lives here are exposed to, by reason of sin: And therefore makes such an Inference hence, as we have explained. 2. *Solomon* in ch. 9. does not only consider *Life in it self*, but under the *Notion* also, of being the way and means, thorow the right improvement whereof men may attain to happiness hereafter: Whereas those that are dead are put out of capacity of doing any thing further for their Soul. For, says he, to him that is joyned to the living there is hope; but the dead have no

more portion in any thing that is done under the Sun. Which therefore seems to be nothing else, but that which he more clearly unfolds, v. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, because there is no work, &c.* But now in this place Solomon speaks of life, abstracting from its relation and use this way, and considers it meerly in reference to its miseries and troubles: And therefore his Inference here, is nothing but what natively results from such a consideration thereof. 3. Solomon in the 9th ch. seems to me to speak of Life and Death with respect to wicked men chiefly, if not only: And in this respect, it is certain, Life is far preferable to Death; since (as he says, v. 10.) There is no preparation work to be done after death for the good of the Soul; whereas whilst there is life there is still hope that wicked men may repent and reform, before it be too late; as he intimates v. 4. and according to the old saying, *Sperandum est vivis, non est spes ulla sepultis.* But now (as was said before) it seems not obscurely to be hinted here; that we are to understand the words of my Text, as refering, if not only, yet specially to the Saints, who
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thorow grace and holiness, have attained worthily to deserve a good name. And this leads me to a *Transition* from the *first* to the *second* and (as I judge) *more native Meaning* of the words, which I lay down to be distinctly considered in the following *Thesis*.

Second Proposition.

The Day of Death is far preferable to the Day of ones Birth, with respect to the Saints; when the parallel is not only in reference to this Life, but inclusive also of the Future.

I don't say, that at *all times* and upon *all accounts* the day of Death is *actually* to be preferred to the day of *Birth* and to *Life*: Since sometimes it may be our *duty* to chuse Life before Death. For even *Paul* himself, after a struggle with himself on this account, whether he should prefer death or life, *Phil. 1. 23. 24.* having impartially weighed the reasons on both sides, concludes *v. 25.* *That considering the usefulness of his life to the Church on earth, it was for the present to be preferred to death.*

Neither

• Neither do I say here, that the Saints *attain* always to *prefer* death to life. No, alas; there are but few comparatively that get this length. Even an *H Ezekiah* will *weep sore* at the thoughts of death, and *chatter like a crane or swallow*, and *mourn as a dove* on that account, Isa. 38. 3, 14. And a *David* also will on this account at sometimes be made to cry out. *Psal.* 39. 13. *O spare me that I may recover strength, &c.*

• But that which I assert here in the Proposition laid down, is; *That the Death of a Saint is preferable to his Birth, because of the misery of this present Life, and the happiness of the Life to come.* For if, (as we shewed before) death be preferable to birth, *meerly* because the comforts of this life are so over-ballanced and weighed down by the sorrows of time: Then surely the *conclusion* is *much more* strong, when we consider the glory and happiness of the *future Life*, and lay it also in the *scale* over and above. • For who then can withstand the force of this Truth; that the *entry upon happiness*, which is by *Death*, is much to be preferred to the *entry upon a miserable life* here, which is by *Birth*.

And, as this Proposition so expressly
Asserted

Asserted in the Text, thus explained, seems so clear in it self: So a more distinct consideration of things, will put it beyond all further doubt and controversy. And therefore I came now to *Prove* the Point further. Which being done, I shall proceed to *Improve* it.

The Proof.

And now to Prove this Point, I shall endeavour to do it by shewing the preferableness of the one to the other, upon the account given; and that in two things: *viz.* 1. By explaining the *Terms* here used of *Birth and Death*; 2. By considering more *directly* the *Present and Future Life*, that these *two Periods* of *Birth and Death* enter the *Saints* upon.

And *first* I shall briefly reflect upon the *Terms* of *Birth and Death*. And here, (as in many other things) I find a *lameness* and defectiveness in *Words*, by which the *true Notions* of *Things* are often *clouded* and almost *lost*. And therefore, tho' I take not upon me to *rectify* these *terms* as *vulgarly used*: Yet the present *subject* necessarily leads me to some *rectification* of the *notions* of the *things*

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things themselves, which we have it may be from education too easily imbib'd. For if in *ordinary converse* it be a *Rule*, *quod loquendum cum Vulgo*; I think we may well subjoyn in *serious Inquiries* into things, *quod sentiendum cum Doctis*. And tho' I pretend not to such rectified notions of things, as others may have reacht; yet since this falls in my way, it may not be amiss to consider what *estimate* we are to make of *Birth* and *Death* with respect to a *Saint*.

• And (1) as to *Birth*; tho' we must consider a *Saint* (as all other men) to be made up of a *Soul* and *Body*, as his two *constituent parts*: Yet it is the *Soul* which chiefly denominates the man. Whence it is that in Scripture our *bodies* are call'd our *Tents* or *Tabernacles*, wherein we lodge for a time; so that, tho' the *Body* be indeed an *Essential* part of man, yet it is the *less principal* part; since the *Soul* can act and live as well out of it as in it. And therefore it is from the *Original* of the *Soul*, that the *birth* of man is chiefly to be reckoned, rather than from the *formation* of the *body*. Now if accordingly we compute the birth of a *Saint*; we are led to a *Three-fold Birth* which results from the *Consideration*.
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The 1st. is by *Creation*, when the Soul of Man is at first *created* and placed in the body : Which indeed carries along with it the formation of the body also ; for we can't conceive the body to be *formed* as to its due perfection, with respect to *union* with the Soul, till the moment of the *Souls infusion* therein ; if, with the *Schools*, I may be admitted to use such a word, who tell us of the Soul, that *creando infunditur, & infundendo creatur*. But that the Soul derives its *original* from Gods *immediate* creating it, and not *ex traduce* (I speak with all deference to learned and worthy Persons of another judgment,) may seem plain, if it were but from that one Scripture, *Zech. 12. 1.* especially if we duely consider its connexion with what precedes. I say then, that the first birth of man, to speak properly, is to be reckoned from the union of the Soul and body in the womb ; (which as to *priority of time* seems to be instantaneously upon the Creation of the Soul ;) rather than from the *Egress* of the child from thence. But since we are most taken with what is most sensible to us ; I shall not contend about words, if the thing be understood : Especially seeing the
 Scripture

Scripture is so calculated in its Expressions, as to use words commonly in use, & understood by the lowest form of Christians. Only (howsoever we use words) I am confident to say, that the *Birth* of Man may very well be reckoned from the *Union* of Soul and Body in the womb: For *whatever* hath these *two constituent parts* of man, can be assign'd to no other *class* but that of *Mankind*.

.. The 2. Birth of Man, according to the Soul, is in *Regeneration* or *Conversion*: Of which Christ speaking *Joh.*

3. Calls it the birth of a man *from above*, v. 3. *ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῇ ἀνωθεν.*

.. The 3. Birth is in *Glorification*. And this admits of a *Twofold Period*, viz.

1. As to the *Soul only* at *Death*, when it separates from the Body, and becomes from that moment perfectly freed from sin and misery, and admitted to the enjoyment of true happiness above: For *the Souls of just persons* even then are said to be *made perfect*, *Heb. 12. 23.* 2. As to *Soul and Body*, when *re-united*, at the *Resurrection*, which is called the *Adoption and Redemption of the Body*, *Rom. 8. 23.*

Now from all this, we may arrive to make some tolerable *Estimate* of that which we commonly call the Birth
and

and Death of a Saint. For 1. that which we commonly call *Birth*, is nothing else but *mans Egress* from the womb, and *his Ingress* into the Society of *Mortals* here. Now what is this, but a kind of *Death*; since we, being ourselves Mortal, see and converse only with Mortal Objects, as all things external here are. Whence it is, that all mans time on earth, even from the *Evening* of the *Worlds Creation* to the *Morning* of the *Resurrection*, is esteemed but as one Night; as is imported *Psal.* 49. 14. When the *Resurrection* is Emphatically Termed *the Morning*, both with respect to *the night of time preceding*, and *the day of eternity about to succeed*: And hence also our Life on earth, is called a *Sleep*, wherein we rather *dream* of things than really apprehend them; and out of which we are first thorowly *awaked* by *Death*: We may see this plainly hinted, *Psal.* 17. 15. Whereas 2. that which we call commonly *Death*, is nothing else but the *unpinning* our mortal *Tabernacles*, and the *manumitting* us, into the immortal *Regions of Light, Love, and Liberty*. Of which the great Saints in Scripture speak no otherwise, than in the familiar *Dialect*

leſt of putting off a ſuit of old Apparel for new and more glorious ones. Thus Paul calls it, *a being unclothed as to the Body, and clothed upon by having Mortality ſwallowed up of Life*, 2 Cor. 5. 4: And Peter calls it, *a putting off this his Tabernacle*. 2 Eph. 1. 14.

Again (2) let us conſider Death; the right notion whereof will become more facile to our apprehenſions, by what we have ſaid of Life. All therefore that I ſhall ſay of it, is, that (beſides that which we commonly call ſo) there is a *Twofold Death*, in a Spiritual ſenſe, which falls under conſideration here.

The 1. is a *Death in Sin*, which is entered into at our *Birth* into the world: For then it is, that we come to enter upon the Stage of a ſinful world. *We are ſhapen in ſin and conceived in iniquity*: And our Birth into the world is rather a *kind of Death* than *Life*; ſince we are *exposed* thereby to *ſinning and ſuffering*, to *vanity and vexation of Spirit*.

The 2. is a *Death to Sin*; which is entered upon at the *difſolution* of the tie between Soul and body; upon which account it is called *Death*. But, tho' it diſunite ſoul and body for a time; yet it may rather be called the Birth of the
Soul,

Soul, in as far as it *translates* it from all manner of *sin and misery*. It is true indeed (as was said before) *Regeneration* is a kind of *new Birth* to the *Soul*, in as far, as it delivers us from the death of *sin* in a great measure. Yet, since that is but a deliverance *in part*; therefore it is by death only that we come *totally* to dye to *sin*. Tho' I grant that this death to *sin* comes to be *more illustriously display'd* at the great period of the *Resurrection*: When the *last enemy Death* comes to be *Totally destroyed and swallowed up in Victory*. 1 Cor. 15. 54. So that from hence we may see, that our *Birth into this world*, is a *Death in Sin*: whereas our *Dissolution*, or the *separation of soul and body* is properly a *Death to Sin*; or a manumission and freedom given us both from *Sin and misery*.

Wherefore, from all that hath been said in the *Premises*, as to both these *Terms of Birth and Death*; we may not unjustly *invert* the notion of them, with respect to the *Saints*; and say, *That the day of our Birth into this world, was the day of our Death, in sin, ignorance, vanity and misery*: Whereas the day of our *Death, may be justly reputed to be the day*

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of our Birth, into the world of purity, knowledge, light and rest.

But 2^{dly}. I come now to consider what that thing we call *Life* is, which the two *Periods* of Birth and Death enter us upon, and with respect to which we can only pass a right judgement of the preferableness of either of them. And truly as to this matter, we are very much in the dark, taking that to be *life* which hath little more of it, than the very shew and appearance. *Life* is a more noble thing than we imagin, when considered in its right notion and idea. We talk of a *vegetative* and *sensitive Life*. But if in *Philosophy* these must needs creep in as distinct species thereof: Yet *Divinity* will refine our thoughts of it a little further. For since *Life* is one of the glorious *Attributes* of the *supreme Being*, who designs himself oft-times the *Living God*, we must needs conceive something high and sublime therein. And as *God* is the fountain of all *Life* to others, so it is only in him that *We* live. So that to speak properly, we have no *life* in our selves, our breath being in our nostrils, and we depending every moment on *God* for new supplies thereof. Therefore we find it the Property

erty of God only to *have Life in himself*, yea and such a Property as is only communicable to Christ, *Joh. 5. 26. For as the Father hath Life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself.* And therefore this is spoken of with respect to Christ, with a special mark of Observation, *Joh. 1. 4. In him was Life.*

But I shall not run further than the Text, for the Ground of my notion of *Life*. For we may plainly perceive by the very *Terms* of Birth and Death in the words, *that there is some Life here imported, with respect to which, as plainly and necessarily presupposed, these periodical terms are made use of.* Now this *Life* herein presupposed must either be the present *Life*, or that which is to come. If it be the present *Life*, then it is apparent, that *Solomon* had very mean and low thoughts of it, since he prefers the destruction of it by *Death* to the commencing it at first by *Birth*. And those very mean thoughts which he hath of it, are a plain *Indication*, that it doth not deserve the noble designation of *Life*; as being rather a *shadow* thereof, than the thing it self. But if it be the *Future Life* that is here imported, then it

presents us with a noble Idea of true Life indeed, as inclusive of true Happiness and Felicity, and lets us see with what good Reason Death is here preferred to Birth. But tho' this last sense gives us the fairest prospect of Life, and the most solid ground of the wise Solomons determination of this case; yet I think, we are to include both these sorts of Life as presupposed clearly in the Text. For as Solomon runs the parallel expressly between Birth and Death: So his doing thus, doth manifestly presuppose that he had run the parallel also between the Present and Future Life; for except the Periods of Birth and Death have respect to these, they must be reckoned to stand as Cyphers here without any significance. But, tho' it is indubitable that Solomon runs the parallel here between Life Present and Future: Yet we are not to imagine that he compares them, as being both included in the true notion of Life, and so as species under the same Genus; but rather as two Opposites; so as to consider that which we call the present Life under the notion of a kind of Death or state of Death; and so to vindicate the notion of true Life to the future only. For as I said before, (when I explained the terms of Birth

Birth and Death,) that our *Birth into this world*, was rather our *Death in Sin and Misery*: Whereas our *death out of this world*, is more properly our *Birth into Happiness* and felicity. So I say now of the Present and Future Life; that the *Present Life* is rather the state of the dead that we die into when we are born: Whereas the *Future Life* is that only which deserves the name of *Life*, as being that state that we are born into when we come to that period, which we call death. And tho' this inversion of Terms may seem strange at first, to such who are so immersed in sense, as not to reflect on things as they are indeed in themselves: Yet if once we come to entertain genuine conceptions of time and eternity, and what concerns these, we will see sufficient reason for such a rectification of vulgar opinions, wherein men are oft detain'd, contrary to reason it self, from a misapplication of meer words.

Wherefore since I take Life for that which either is proper to God, or which derivatively is communicated to subjects capable of it, (I mean made so by himself;) it is therefore to be laid down as the basis of our ensuing reflections, that *Life and Happiness* are the same thing,

thing, tho' the words express this differently to us. But it is only the consideration of true *Life or Perfection, as peculiar to the Saints* that I am here to consider. Which, that it may the more distinctly appear, it may not be amiss to run the *Parallel* a little between the *present and future Life*, as we call them; that we may the more easily admit of the *Conclusion* here in the *Text*, as to the preferableness of the latter to the first: Which methinks the Apostle expresses well; when he calls the future Life, by a *κατ' ἑξοχὴν Life*; assigning to the present Life the designation of *Mortality* only, 2 Cor. 5. 4. And in doing this, I must first consider what *those Qualifications of Life* are that denominate it excellent, happy and, desirable. And as to this, I shall express my self in words common and known to all; that the *impressions* may be the more clear and cogent. And now, as to this matter, I cannot think of any *Conveniency or true Qualification of Life* wanting, where these *seven Things* Concur; viz. 1. *Perfect Health*; 2. *Full enjoyment of all Good*; 3. *Unmixed and undisturbed Peace and Joy*; 4. *The most pleasant place of abode*; 5. *The most excellent Company*; 6. *A*

6. *An untainted Good Name* ; 7. *The perpetual Duration of all these*. Wherefore let us consider these *Qualifications* or *Properties of Life*, with respect both to the *Present* and the *Future* ; that we may see, whether our *Passage by Birth* into the one, or *by death* into the other be to be preferred.

I. *Perfect Health.*

By this we understand *perfect rectitude* both of *soul and body*, and all the *faculties and powers* of them. And if so, our *Inquiry* must be, where this rare *Jewel* is to be found, without which all our other comforts are insipid and tasteless.

Surely it cant be acquired in *this miserable World*, either as to *Mind or Body*. For as to our *Minds* ; how *uncultivated* are our *judgments* as to our *apprehensions* of *spiritual things* ! How *vain* are our *thoughts* ! How *perverse* our *will* ! How *irregular* our *affections* ! How *treacherous* our *memories* ! And how *lame and defective* are our *actions and performances*, even to the most *spiritual duties*. And as to our *Bodies* ; do we not carry about with us the *Principles of*
F 4 Diseases

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Diseases, and the *seeds of death* it self? And what innumerable *pains and maladies* are we here subject to; every day to most bringing along with it some new *exercise* or other, or at least some *tendency* to it.

.. But then, if we cast our eyes forward upon that *blessed state* that is to ensue upon the back of death; we may there see this invaluable blessing actually attained. No *cloud* doth then offuscate the mind and judgment; no *vanity* of thought, no *perverseness* of will, no *irregularity* of affections, no *treachery* of Memory, no *deficiency* in duty; I say none of all these things is then present to disturb or corrupt the Soul. And when the great period of the *Resurrection* comes, *perfect health* will be also the inseparable property of the *Body*: In order to which, it remains in the mean time in the grave, in order to *purification and preparation* for such a state; as being even then united to Christ, as we see, 1 Cor. 6. 14, 15.

2. Full Enjoyment of Good.

True Life is not only inclusive of *subjective*, but of *Objective Happiness* too:
And

And therefore there must not only be perfect *Health* considered in its *notion*, but the full *Enjoyment of Good*, even of all good, and the supreme good.

But now, let us reflect seriously with our selves, if this be attainable here. But what! Are we not *absent from the Lord whilst we are at home in the body*? And is it possible that we can be reckoned to enjoy fully true good; whilst we are at such a distance from the supreme good, God himself. It is true, we may enjoy here some tastes of Gods love and favour: But these are but some drops, compared with the ocean of felicity. Do we not here Complain, Cry and Lament, that we want this and the other good thing? We are still craving and never satisfied. And therefore it is sufficiently evident that we want many things needful, and conducive to make our life truly happy.

But, on the other hand, what can be wanting to us, when we come to enjoy God fully, who is the only *necessary Good*, the only *suitable Good*, and the *All-sufficient Good*. O this blessed feast upon the *hive of sweetness*, the *ocean of pleasure*, the *Treasure of Happiness*! upon which the *Celestial inhabitants*, are ever feasting and yet

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yet ever full. Who can conceive the *infinite* bounty of the King of Heaven, which he there lets out, to the wonder and ravishment of *Angels and glorified Souls!* Who can express the joy, the *satisfaction*, the *ecstasie*, that fills the thoughts and dilates the affections of those happy *Banqueters!* All tears are now wiped away from the *Saints* once sorrowful and weeping eyes. They have forgotten their former poverty, and remember their misery no more. O blessed, blessed, ever blessed they, who are now got safe into this *banquetting House*; and who have the banner of love displayed over them to the full! O how pure! How perfect! Are those pleasures which are at *Gods right hand!* What can be thought to be wanting to those, who see the face of God, and the Lamb for ever, and who are admitted to eat of the tree of life, that is in the midst of the *Paradise of God.* They thirst no more, but are led to the pure fountains of living water that flows from the throne of God. In a word, we may easily conceive, what their abundance and affluence of all things is, when we have said, that God himself will be to them all in all.

3. True Peace and Joy.

And now what else can be the result and effect of both *subjective and objective happiness*, but *undisturbed peace and unmixed joy*.

Which are such blessings, as we have only some *pledges and earnest*s of here below. For we all know, or at least may know, what *allays* these admit of here; by *troubles and perplexities, griefs and fears*, that constantly attend us, and give us sufficient reason to conclude that *our rest is not here*. All our mirth, joy and quiet here, is *fleshly, vain, and transitory*. Our *laughter is like the crackling of thorns under a pot*; and oftentimes *in the midst thereof the heart is sorrowful, and the end thereof heaviness*. And if at any time, we are here admitted to the *manifestations of Gods love, and the sight of his face*, as a just ground of peace and joy; yet how quickly do these remove from us, whereby our *Sky becomes overcast again with new clouds, which return after the rain*.

But if we cast our eyes within the vail, we shall perceive true rest, peace and joy prepared for the Saints; in so much, that
even

even Heaven it self is upon this account termed singly *peace*. Isa. 57. 1, 2. Thete our praises shall be brim full with Raptures of satisfaction, joy and gladness.

4. The most delightful Place of Abode.

• A pleasant *situation* is that which adds much to the satisfaction of ones abode here; and a delightful *seat and place* to be in, is certainly one of the greatest *Conveniences* of Life.

• But can any *spot of Earth* bear this Character, in a true and full sense; when the very *ground is cursed* upon the account of mans sin? No, no; we may justly cry out, with *David*, wo is me that I dwell in *Meschesb*, and in the Sun scorch'd *Tents of Kedar*. We are here only in a *wildernefs state*. And tho' God hath given us many eminent *Instances* of his wisdom and power, in the admirable frame even of this lower Creation: Yet alas, all these are but the *dark shadows* of the *glorious Lanskip* of the *upper Paradise*.

• For it is *Heaven* alone that can answer such a *Character*, as being a *place* wholly made for *true pleasure* and delight. If
the

the *Palace* of the *great God* may be thought to be infinitely glorious and admirable, above the *clay-cottages* of those whose habitation is in the dust; then let us entertain more suitable thoughts of that so desirable a place: Which is such, as the heart of man could never conceive any thing to bear any true resemblance unto it; the most magnificent representation of it in Scripture, *Rev. 21*. Being only *figurative*, and therefore far short of what it is in it self.

5. The most Excellent Company.

It is *Society* that Alleviats, in a great measure, our sorrows and griefs here, and makes up the defects of other things: And as man is made for *Society*, so there is nothing more desirable than *excellent and suitable company*.

But, tho' (comparatively speaking) some such may be found here; yet our best company on earth is, as other things, vain, and short of the true Idea of such a blessing. *The best men are men at best*, and subject to unruly passions and humours; which is a great allay unto their company: besides that oft-times, *sins and scandals, miseries and wants*, render the company

company of men but little acceptable to one another. And if there were none of these things to disturb us, yet *all men are mortal*, and can enjoy one another but for a short time on earth.

But then, if we turn our thoughts from earth to heaven, we find our wishes and desires this way fully answered. For there we shall be admitted to converse with the *great God* himself, the most glorious object of delights, and infinitely the best company. There we shall be admitted to lean our heads on *Christ's bosom*, and tell him all our most concerning secrets, and have him to be our dear friend and companion for ever. There we shall be equal to the *Angels*, and become their *fellow-servants* and *fellow-worshippers*. And there shall we enjoy the company of all the glorified Saints, the *Patriarchs, Kings, Priests, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and eminent Ministers and Christians*, that as *bright clouds of witnesses* have got to heaven before us. And there, among others, we shall meet (with *endeared Embraces*) our *loving and dear Friends and Relatives*, that were so acceptable to us on earth. We shall all meet together in the *Celestial Regions*,

Regions, and in the streets and Mansions of the new Jerusalem: and as we shall be ever with the Lord, so shall we be ever also with one another.

6. An untainted good Name.

This is yet another blessing that attends the *true life*: For to be exposed to *reproaches*, and to *underly calumnies* and evil reports, is inconsistent with the notion of this; tho' I grant God can turn this, as other evils, to the advantage of his own.

But alas, this is one superadded misery to the many that we meet with here, that we are tossed to and fro with the various *censures* of men. Even the Apostles themselves were so far from escaping this Contagion, that *they were esteemed as the dross and refuse of mankind*, as the very vilest of miscreants, by a blind, mad world. *Fame* hath been for a long time the *Goddeſs of ambitious and high Spirits*: But it is the greatest-nonsense to talk of *perpetuating ones name* here; since the furthest that the *fame* of any can go, is but to the *limits of time and space*.

Fame and good name then, are *Jewels* of

of the *Eternal Crown of Happiness*, wherewith God doth adorn such only as he admits to the everlasting enjoyment of himself. He then that conquers the *Universe*, hath but the *shadow* of true *Fame*, which God bestows only on such who have thorow grace attained to overcome *sin, Satan and the world*. And he also who hath left his name behind in the *frontispiece* of an hundred learned *Volumns*, hath yet fallen short of a *perpetual fame*; except he hath also attained to have his name *ingraven and inrolled* in the *eternal Registers and Records of Heaven*.

7. The Perpetual Duration of all these.

Had we all the forementied *Qualifications of true and perfect Life*; yet if we did but admit of a *suspition* in our thoughts as to their *continuance and permanency*: This one suspicious thought would be enough to dump all our satisfaction with respect to so many blessings. And therefore to make Life every way happy and perfect, this superadded *Qualification of the Eternity of all*, must of necessity come in.

And therefore we are hence led to see,
that

that there is no true *Life* here, since all our comforts and enjoyments are transitory and fading; as being momentary and confin'd within the narrow limits and precincts of years, days, hours and minutes. And no wonder; since even that which we call *Life* here, is it self but a vapour, that appeareth for a little, and then vanisheth away; yea, such a vapour, as has not so much a being, as the shew and appearance thereof: For to this purpose doth *James*, ch. 4. v. 14. Point it forth very expressively; when he says it is a vapour, *Περὶς ὀλίγον φαινομένη*.

But on the other hand, this adds to all the happiness of the future *Life*, that all the enjoyments and blessings there are permanent and eternal. Norust doth there corrupt them, nor Thief steal them, nor age wast them, nor death devour them. They that once enter upon the actual fruition of such Enjoyments, do ever retain their possession of them.

And thus I have run thorow the Qualifications and Properties of true *Life*, as briefly as I could. Which, since they only quadrate with the future *Life*, of perfection; I suppose it is easy to conceive, what Reason we have to conclude with *Solomon*, that Death to a Saint is

far preferable, on all accounts, to his Birth; or, to speak it in his very words, *Better is the day of such a ones Death, than the day of his Birth.*

The Improvement.

In the next place I come, to bring home the *Doctrine* to our selves, by a serious *Improvement* thereof: Which I design shall be *Twofold*; viz. *Informative* of our *Judgment*, and *Regulative* of our *Practice*; with respect to our *Duty*, as to both.

1st. The Information of our Judgments.

• Although all that hath been said, was with this design to rectifie our thoughts, as to the *Doctrine*, which is the *subject matter* of the *Text*: Yet there are these things farther that we may rationally and indeed necessarily *Infer* hence.

• 1. Infer. We see (from what hath been said) not only the certainty, of a *Future Life* and *State*, but of an *immediate Happiness* and *Glory* also, which the *Souls* of the *Righteous* pass into at *Death*. When the poor *Beggar* dyed, he was carried by *Angels* into *Abraham's bosome*; Luk. 16. 26. And the poor penitent *Thief*

Thief was on one and the same day, in misery on the Cross with Christ, and in paradise with him. Luk. 23. 43. And St. Paul, the great Columbus of the upper world (who first made a voyage and returned again in time as we see 2 Cor. 12. 1, 4, &c.) Could never reflect afterwards upon that paradise, which he then saw, but with earnest breathings to be there again; as we see 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2. &c. Phil. 1. 23. And indeed if there were not a future state, we could never give any rational account, why God should make so Noble a Creature as Man; but might then cry out with the Psalmist, Psal. 89. 47. Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain. And were not this glorious life and state to be entered upon, by the Souls of Believers, immediately at Death, it would greatly damp the sweet and comfortable reflections which they are called to have thereof then.

2. Infer. We have hence also a rational and satisfactory Answer to give, to all the scruples and Objections, that can be put up by any against this Doctrine. And now since we hinted before some Doubts, that naturally might arise in mens minds, from the first proposal and idea of this Doctrine; I shall therefore in this place

briefly *Answer* the same, from what hath been already said.

• Wherefore 1. Since *Atheistical and Antiscriptural Persons*, cry out upon this Doctrine as ridiculous, from a *fond imagination*, that the *Soul* has no existence when *separate from the body*. I Answer, 1.

That such an imagination, is not only contrary to Scripture but Reason it self. For how is it possible for us to conceive that such a noble, active and intelligent being as the *Soul* of Man, should be meerly dependant on the body, and have only its duration for a short space in this vain world. Especially 2. since we see, that this present life is rather an *appearance* than a *reality*, as all things we here converse with are also.

• Or, 2. If the *carnal Rationalist and Philosopher* further object, and argue against this Doctrine, from the consideration of *Deaths being the Destruction of nature*. I Answer, 1. that to speak properly, there is no such destruction of nature by Death, as many imagine. For the *Soul* is not destroyed by it; but acts and lives more nobly than before. Neither is the *Body* properly destroyed; but only reduced into its first Principles, in order to be new moulded and more gloriously

riously re-edified than before. And therefore, since the *two Essential constituent parts* of man remain in being; man can't be said to be destroyed: For tho' the *immediate Tye between Soul and Body* be loosed, yet it is for a time only; and in the mean time *the relation* they stand in to one another continues, even when the *actual union* is *suspended*. And besides all this, it being the Soul that is principally the Man; we are therefore to reckon that the man is in being still, even when unbodied. But 2. let it be considered, that *Death* is not preferred to *Birth or Life*, meerly as it is *the dissolution of nature*, as now existing; but the *formal Reason* of this is upon the account of the *excellency* of the future Life, which death is the passage into. For upon this account only is it, that the Apostle prefers death to life, 2 Cor. 5. 4. *Not for that we would be unclothed, says he, but clothed upon, that Mortality may be swallowed up of Life.*

But 3. as to what many poor sincere-Christians are apt to object against this Point, from the expressions that sometimes *Death* goes under in Scripture; of its being (as the punishment of sin) our enemy, and to be destroyed, 1 Cor. 15. 26. I

would for *Answer*, propose to them (besides what hath been already said) this one *consideration*; That, tho' Death be indeed our enemy, as it is inflicted as a punishment of sin, since the fall: Yet it has now *altered its nature and end*, with respect to *Saints*, since Christs death especially; *Christ having slain death and him that had the power thereof*. Indeed *Death passeth still upon all men*: but in very *different respects*. For to the *wicked*, death is still continued as a *grim Messenger and King of Terrours*. But, as for the *Saints*, Death is now become Christs *servant* to convey home the Souls of his own to himself. Therefore, as *Christ* is said to have *abolished death*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. So he is said also, Rev. 1. 18. *To have taken, into his custody and keeping, the Keys of Hell and Death*. Upon which accounts we may perceive, what little reason we have to fear Death, when he acts only in *commission under our dear Lord and Saviour*; and when also so blessed a *Guide* as he leads the way.

And 4. As to the *Objection*, which the *vulgar sort of groveling Mortals* are apt to make against Death; that it *robsb them of, and separates them from all their*
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comforts, friends, possessions, enjoyments and hopes. I Answer, that where the case is thus with any, I must needs grant they have reason to prefer life to death. If thou hast *all thy portion in this life*, I shall not wonder to see thee prefer *earth to heaven*, and *dust to gold*. But, O poor wretch, art thou not ashamed of such an objection; which militates indeed against thee, but not against this Doctrine. For the Saints (of whom we here speak) will tell thee; that, whereas *death separates thee from all thy comforts*; it is in *that way alone*, that they expect to reap *the full harvest of all joy and comfort*; for *at the right hand of God there is fulness of joy*, and in *his presence there are pleasures for evermore*.

3: Infer. We may see hence also, *the folly and ignorance of the generality of men, as to their notions and conceptions, of Life and Death*: Who seem to think, that all comforts are to be found only in this Life, and therefore give way to strange and melancholly apprehensions of death and what follows it. As there are many *poor Creatures* in the world, living in *mean cells and cottages*, in some obscure corner; whose low minds (hav-

ing never travelled from the smell of *their native thatch and turff*;) represent the world to themselves no otherwise, than according to the *ideas* which a *barren spot of earth* of a few miles circumference hath afforded them. So the *generality* of mankind seem to be so pre-occupied with the *prejudices* of *sense and custom*; as never to have suitably reflected on those things, which *right Reason* may not obscurely conclude, from *Scripture Premises*, concerning the glory and excellency of the *future state* of the *spirits of just men made perfect*. For if our thoughts were more inured to such *Divine Meditations*, we would dispise the *vanities* of a *fading life* more; since we converse here but with imaginary comforts and joys, tho' with too real griefs and miseries.

2d. The Regulation of our Practise.

. As *Practise* is the end of *Knowledge*; so my *design*, in all that hath been said, was to bring you to a sincere & conscientious *Performance* of those *Duties*, that the *Doctrine* handled doth call for from you: And therefore suffer me to lay them impartially before you, at this time.

And,

And, in doing this; since not only the *Doctrine* in it self, but the present *Occasion* of this *Discourse*, calls for a particular and becoming *Consideration* this way: I shall therefore endeavour, (with what succinctness is convenient,) to do these two things here; viz. 1. to *Improve* the *Doctrine Practically*, with respect to that *Duty*, that is incumbent upon all from hence, as to the good of our Souls. 2. to *Improve* it also *special-ly*, with respect to the *sad occasion* of this present meeting and concourse.

And (1) I shall endeavour to *Improve* the *Doctrine*, in the *General*, so as may be of use to all of you. And what I have thus to say to you, I will comprise and summ up in these three *Directions* or *Rules*.

1. Direct. Take heed how you carry with respect to your *Spiritual state*, and *Interest in God* thorow *Christ*. Which *Advice*, I will take up in these three *Parts*; which I am sure you are all concerned seriously to mind.

1. *Examine and Try* your selves if *God* be your *Portion* and *Christ* your *Salvour*. What are you secure, whilst you remain at uncertainties as to this matter! What *ground* have you to believe, that

that *Christ* is *yours*? Have you renounced *Sin*, *Satan*, the *world*, and *sinful self*? Have you accepted *Christ* wholly in all his *offices*? and have you laid hold on him as your *alone Saviour*? Be careful, my friends, that you found not your *hopes* on a *mistake*, and thus build on the *sand*. *Religion* is more than a *name*, and *Conversion* more than a *notion*. Therefore Judge your *selves* impartially as to this matter, lest you be judged to condemnation by God for your neglect to do so.

2. Be sure, what ever you do, to lay the whole weight and stress of your *Salvation*, in the merits and righteousness of *Christ*; and fancy not that your own inherent *Righteousness* must go *Partner* with the *Righteousness* of *Christ* in the point of *Justification*; lest thereby you impeach the all-sufficient *Merits* of *Christ* of *defectiveness*, and claim the privilege to be accounted your own *Saviours*. But endeavour, with the Apostle *Phil. 3. 9.* To be found in him, not having your own *righteousness*, which is of the *Law*, but that which is through the faith of *Christ*, the *righteousness* which is of God by faith.

3. Mind the concernment of your *Souls*
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Salvation with all earnestness and diligence : For what profit will it be unto you to gain the whole world, if you lose your Souls, or what can you give in exchange again for them if once they be lost. Therefore trifle not away precious time and golden opportunities in doing nothing, or it may be things worse than nothing ; lest you be forced at length to cry out (as the great *Grotius* did when dying) *Ah vitam perdidi operose nihil agendo*. Be not so besotted as to lay the stress of your hopes upon an *imaginary Death-bed Repentance* : But since now you have a price put into your hands to get wisdom with ; beg and endeavour after that happy Part and Lot, that shall never be taken from you, when once attained.

2. Direct. Take heed how you carry, with respect to your Bodies. And as to this matter, I will give you a taste of my Thoughts, in these three things.

1. Watch against your Bodies, that they prove not snares to your Souls ; as they are I fear to many in more than one respect. For 1. how oft do our senses deceive and cheat the Soul, and presenting it with innumerable objects to distract and disturb it from the pursuit of

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of more noble things. And 2. the *Fancy* and unruly *Imagination* doth no less oft discompose the Mind and Reason, by innumerable *Chimera's*; in the forming and producing of which it is for the most part strangely fruitful. Yea 3. the *wants* of the Body prove oft-times a great *Remora* to the Soul in its spiritual operations, by giving occasion to solicitude and anxious cares, about *what we shall eat and drink, and wherewithall we shall be clothed, and how we shall prevent such and such evils and troubles, &c.* In all which respects, we have great reason both to watch over and to watch against our Bodies.

2. *Live above your Bodies.* Let not your thoughts and cares terminate only there. What! Shall a mortal fading *Carcase* swallow up our *thoughts* and inhance our *affections*; when the time is coming, that Death will at one blow cut down the same, whereon we have bestowed so much pains in vain? Yea the time is coming, when this beautiful outside will stink and turn to corruption: And then *worms* must nestle in those *holes*, where *sprightly eyes* did once shine; and all our graceful and well proportioned *members* and parts moulder

moulder down into deformity and rottenness. Therefore let us hence learn to live above our Bodies.

3. *Be content to be unbodied for a time..*
 It is this way alone that we can expect to see God fully, and to reach the happy Life; and therefore it is our Duty to work up our hearts to an hearty contentment in and satisfaction with this way, method and ordinance of Gods own appointment, in order to consummate our felicity. Nay let me say further, that we ought to endeavour, not only to be content to die, but to be willing and desirous to depart that we may be with Christ, which is best of all. This was Pauls attainment, *Phil. 1. 23.* And not his only, but that which was very common to the Saints in those more heavenly times, *Rom. 8. 23. 2 Cor. 5. 4, 5.* Yea the very inanimate Creation hath an earnest propensity this way, groaning for a dissolution as to its present form, that it may be restored to its pristine glory and splendour, before it became the stage of sin and theatre of misery: This we may see, *Rom. 8. 19, 21, 22.* Which is a consideration that may well shame us out of our earthly frame, that we have sunk into for the most part in
 these

these depraved days. I know indeed, that we are apt to reckon it a great attainment in a Christian (and comparatively indeed with the frame of most it is so) *to be content to die*, (in submission to Divine good pleasure) *yet desirous to live*. But the excellency of the Christian attainment and frame of spirit, in this matter, stands in the *inversion* of the common order; viz. *In being desirous to die, yet content to live*, in submission to Gods will; and in regard of service to be done for God further. And indeed, when a Christian hath once tasted of the pleasure and delight of communion with God, and thus been admitted to some fore-tastes of the future glory, he can scarce any longer contain himself (*the love of God in Christ constraining him*) from crying out; *O Time be gone! O Eternity make hast!* Why art thou so long a coming to those that are ready to burst with longing after the immediate sight and fruition of their God and Saviour forever. Don't the Spirit and the Bride both, Eccho forth with a sweet pathos, come Lord Jesus: And shall not our Souls joyn in the consort, and ingeminat, Amen, even so come Lord Jesus, come, come.

3. Direct.

3. Direct. *Take heed, how you carry with respect to your Souls. Which Advice I take up also in these Three Things; which I shall but very briefly propose.*

First. *Be careful to cultivate your Souls; that so you may grow dayly in a meetness and preparedness for Heaven and Glory.* And as there are two principal Faculties of the Soul, the *Understanding and Will*; so accordingly, let it be your great study to adorn these, with what tends to render them more and more excellent. And 1. *Improve your Understandings, by dilating and enlarging them by further degrees of true & spiritual Knowledge. Grow in the Knowledge of God and Christ, of the Vanity of the World and Excellency of Heaven, and of the Worth of the Soul; and in summ, of all Gospel-Truths and Promises, and the legal Precepts and Duties, that are revealed as needful to be known.* 2. *Improve your Wills and Affections also, by more and more Grace; that the Habits thereof may be strengthened by repeated Acts, and that so these habits thus strengthened, may be exerted & put forth the more sweetly and freely, in the out-going of the Soul in all its acts and operations.*

2. *Employ your Souls always in Gods service.* This is and ought to be your chief and constant work and business. Let us with complacency and chearfulness imploy our selves this way; that it may be our *meat and drink to do the will of our Father who is in Heaven.* What is our business in the world if it be not this. For it is an opportunity to serve God here, that alone can make a Saint content and willing to stay below in this *Dung-hill world*, when his Soul is otherwise wholly propending *Heaven-ward.*

* 3. Seek to have your *Souls* admitted to *Converse* with God here. For if we are not admitted to this happy *Society* wholly, yet let us endeavour after this *Blessing* here below, in as far as God may be pleased to privilege us with it. Alas, that we should be satisfied with the *Society of shadows and vanishing things* here below; whilst we may have *communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.* It is this blessed Fellowship alone, that can *sweeten and familiarise* Death and dissolution to us, and make *separation* appear rather a change of our Place than of our Company.

But

But (2) I must also subjoyn some more special improvement of the *Doctrine*, with respect to our *Practise* in relation to the *sad Occasion* of our present *Meeting* together at this time. And here (tho' what I am to say further may be of use to all, yet) I address my self more particularly to *You*, whom this *Dispensation of Providence* doth more nearly respect and concern. And what I have to say here, I shall comprise in a *Threefold Counsel or Advice*.

1. Couns. *Submit your selves cordially to Gods correcting hand in this stroke. Remember the Patience of Job, under greater severity; and say with him, the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the Name of the Lord. All the Providences of God are the Effects of the highest wisdom, and with respect to the Saints, they all flow from love and mercy also. Nothing falls out casually in such matters, however they appear to us. For if a sparrow fall not to the ground, without our Father which is in Heaven; then surely a Friend, a Relative, and Child of God cannot be removed hence without his special providence; for are we not of more value, than many sparrows?*

2. Couns. *Moderate your sorrows as*

H

to

to the Person deceased, from the consideration of the place and company she is gone to, and the happiness she now enjoys. For, blessed be God, we sorrow not to day as those that have no hope: For we have not the least shadow of doubt as to her happiness and glory. But if we have any thing to bewail this day, it is as to our selves, that we are left behind. Indeed we have reason to lament her removal, as a loss to her Relatives, a loss to her Friends, yea and a loss to the Country. But otherwise, with respect to her self, we have rather cause of joy than sorrow. If I may be so bold, as to suppose the Lord speaking to us, in the words of Jerom, (who to comfort a pious Matron, named Paula, upon the death of her daughter, brings in the Lord speaking to her,) may we not think that the Lord speaks, (by this dispensation) unto you to this purpose. "I have made this your Relative and Friend mine. But what! Do you envy my possession? Where can she be better than with me? Would you bring her back from Rivers of Pleasures to the valley of Tears? From Health to Sicknes? From a Throne to a Dungeon. May we not therefore, in

in this case, allude to our Lords expression, *Joh. 14. 28. If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I go to the Father.* And I suppose, could we now hear her speak to us, it would be in words of such an importance.

3. Couns. *Imitate what was Good, Valuable and Praise-worthy in her.* Imitate her, in her *Faith*; in her *Charity*; in her *Affiduity* in Religious Duties; in an impartial scrutiny into the state of her own Soul, in her closet retirements, and publick walk and conversation; in a sincere design to honour and please God; in a chearful delight in doing good to all; and in patience and submission under affliction, and this Leads me to a *Transition* from the *Doctrine* to the *Person*; in whom we may see a *Laudable Example*, which may serve to back the *Preceding Precepts*, as being (at least to many of us here) an *ocular Demonstration* thereof.

The Character.

And here give me leave to present you with a few hints of this worthy Saint; which I have either known from her self immediately, or from an impartial observation of her Life and walk. And

I am the rather emboldned to do this; because, although many others knew her much *earlier and longer* than I; yet there were few, she was pleased to condescend to be more free with in the *concernments* of her Soul. But, since my Brother, who hath already preceded me, on the *same occasion*, hath, besides a *General Character* of her, given you some *succinct narrative* of her *last Hours*; I shall therefore only present you further with some account of her *Christian Life and Conversation*, that may be of further use with respect to *Imitation* by others, as well as conducive to make her *Memory* further precious.

.. Her *natural Temper* was *Retired and serious*, and altogether averse from *crowds of Company* and the *hurries of the world*: Yet no way *Morose and Sullen*, but *Pleasant and Affable* to All; and becomingly *Free* also with her *Friends*: And such she specially reckoned so, who were truly *Pious and Religious*. For it might justly be said of her, as of *David*, that *all her delight was in the Saints*, whom she esteemed the *excellent Ones of the Earth*. And such Persons she valued according to the *degree of worth* that

that she see in any, without regard to the *discriminating name of a Party*. For she was careful, (besides her regard for all pious and vertuous Persons) duely to ponder the *superadded Qualifications* that she see in any, that might entitle them to a more particular share in her *Friendship*.

And as her *Temper* was naturally *serious*, so God blessed her very early, even in her *childhood*, with *true seriousness and Piety*; as she hath been forced oftner than once to confess, with grateful *Acknowledgments* of Gods mercy to her on that account, as well as comfortably to *reflect* upon the *Blessing* she had, in being descended from *eminently Religious Parents*, and brought up in *true Christian Education*.

A natural *Modesty* attended her, in all her *Actions*, even the most serious. An *eminent instance* whereof was this; that, tho' she was educated in the *Congregational-way* very strictly, yet she could never be induced, (as is usual with such,) to give any *open or formal account* of her Souls concerns before others; and upon that account she had been wholly debarred from the *most spiritual of ordinances*; had not God,

(by providential acquaintance) impreſt that juſt Character of her upon the mind of the Reverend Dr. Jacomb, as (upon an inquiry into ſuch things) to admit of her, (notwithſtanding this) to all ordinances with intire ſatisfaction. This I ſpeak not, with the leaſt deſign to reflect on any Party or Way; (eſpecially ſince God hath been pleaſed of late to cement the two ſticks of Ephraim and Judah in ſo great a meaſure, by an happy Union :) but I mention it only, by way of Caution both to Miniſters and Churches; that we may ſee, what tendereſs is required in debarring poor modeſt Chriſtians from what in Gods ſight they have, it may be more right to than many others, who can talk better and more; as well, as there ought to be a juſt caution in the admitting Perſons, who may be vitious and ſcandalous. However, for my own part I muſt ſay, that I would in this caſe be under a great Dread and Fear, to reject any poor Soul, in whom I think I ſee, (tho' in a ſmall degree, and as a grain of muſtard ſeed,) Aliquid Chriſti, any thing of Chriſts Image: For I judge we err more ſafely on the ſide of Charity, (if indeed it be poſſible ſo to err) than

than on the side of a *precipitant* and presumptuous judging of ones state and fitness, from Rules of our own prescribing; when none can tell me, *what the least degree of sincerity and grace is which God doth accept, and which gives one right to participate of all Ordinances.*

She was a careful and impartial Searcher of the Scriptures, which she read with great judgment and observation, with the use of the best helps, she could have for that end. But though she studied to understand every part of Scripture; yet she was most conversant in the more spiritual parts thereof. She took many a mental walk in the delicious Garden of Davids Psalms, and sat oft with great pleasure, under the close Arbour of Solomon's song; which, as she learned over by heart (as to the Words) in her Childhood; so attained, in a great measure, both to understand and experience in her riper years.

And, together with the Scriptures, she read, with great pains and judgment, many of the most solid and practical English Writers; as her Books she hath left behind will witness to such as have them, when they see the many Marginal Writings, wherewith she hath filled them,

according as she was edified and affected her self with what she read. And tho' her Characters be such, as none can well understand; yet the consideration of *those Truths*, that she thereby points at, will discover both the *judiciousness* and *seriousness* of her spirit. And I hope these very hints, (though it may be not distinctly apprehended) may be a *leading Example of seriousness and piety to her surviving Relatives.*

• She was *laborious* and almost unwearied in *Duty*, especially *Fasting and Prayer*; which last *Ordinance* seemed to be the very food she lived on, and the air she breathed in. She *hungred and thirsted after God*, as the hart after the *water brooks*; and would often pleasantly reflect on an expression of Mr. *Rutherford*s to that purpose (in his *Book of Letters* which she greatly delighted in) and say, *I think God feeds me with hunger, viz. After the enjoyment of God, and manifestations of his Love.*

• She was *zealously bent* to advance Gods Honour, and propagate the Gospel, (which I hope *others* will imitate her in,) and used to say, *For what else hath God given me life, and any share of worldly things.* And, upon this account, her
Temper

Temper being naturally timorous, she would oft with great earnestness complain of her self, *That she feared her fears were such, as might dishonour God, and disparage her Profession in the eyes of such as are without*; though yet her fears were more visible to her self than any else.

However, this fearful Temper did represent *Death* to her oft in *Melancholly Ideas*: Yet she would commonly say, *I fear not to be dead, but only to dye; neither do I fear Death so properly, as she very fears thereof*. Upon which account, she would oft chide her self, as acting so irrationally and unchristianly. But God gave her, in a great measure, the Conquest over such Fears before her Death. However, this Temper of hers made her oft say, That for her own part, she could never joyn with that *Prayer*, (in the *Service-Book*) *From sudden Death deliver us*: For she feared a *lingring* rather than a *sudden death*; which God in some measure did satisfy her in.

In the midst of her *Complainings* on whatever account, she would still break out with a *Caution* to her self; *But what do I? I must praise as well as pray; for my mercies are more than my wants*:
 yea,

yea, even my wants may be my mercy. And therefore she would beg the assistance of others in this work; and say, I desire you to praise as well as pray on my account.

Yea (which may seem strange) notwithstanding her fears as to her self, she was of a bold and confident Temper in the *publick Concerns of Religion*; and would not easily be shaken in her resolutions that way, whatever Opposition or Reflection she might meet with on that account from an ignorant World: And, if there were *any* that thought or spoke contemptuously of *serious piety*, she could not but with *generous pity and compassion* reflect upon them.

• She had a very particular regard for her *Relatives and Friends*, especially as to what might be conducive to the real profit of their Souls. And I may say, *That she travelled as it were in birth for her Children a second time, that she might see Christ formed in them.* And, I hope, that as God was pleased to give her much satisfaction in this before her death; so her Prayers may come to be yet further answered, in due time, this way.

• She had attained a *well-grounded Assurance* of her *Interest in God and Christ*: which, (to my observation) she never actually

actually doubted of, even in the midst of Temptations. Although, her natural Temper being suspicious, and not easily satisfied in such a grand concern, she would oft put up *Questions*, as to this matter, (to such as she could be free with) in such a way, as if she seemed to doubt thereof; and would oft say, *If it be so and so with me, why am I thus?* Yet (as she hath intimated to some) this was rather, that she might be further satisfied from the *Reasons of others*, as well as from her *own Evidences*; for she thought she could never be *too sure* of this weighty and concerning *Business*.

She had several times some *unusual Impressions* of things upon her Spirit, especially in *Dreams*; which, though she was cautious not to lay too great a stress on; (for she founded on a *surer word of Testimony*;) yet she could not but take particular notice of. At one time, said she, (for I give this in her own words as near as I can remember) "I dreamed, that I saw the representation of two *Humane Bodies*, but so glorious above what our frail Bodies are here, as admits of no comparison. They were, to my Apprehension, like the *finest and purest Amber*, with Rays proceeding from them

"them like the shinings and glances of
 "Diamonds or Rubies; and so transpa-
 "rent, that the beautiful contexture and
 "motion of the internal parts appeared
 "no less plainly to me, than the exte-
 "nal figure. Which, whilst with Ra-
 "vishment I looked upon, methoughts
 "it was suggested to me, *Such shall the*
 "*Bodies of the Saints at the Resurrection be.*
 "This extraordinary Dream she would
 speak of sometimes in these or the like
 words; but never without a sensible e-
 motion and emphasis, which added to the
 pleasure of hearing the Account.

. At another time, (in the midst of
 one of her tedious *Exercises*) falling a-
 sleep, she seemed (according to her own
 expression) to be *struggling and confli-*
cting with two Hands; which, as she
 thought, did at last so tyre her out, that
 she was ready to *succumb*, her strength
 quite failing her: In the midst of which
 plunge and difficulty, *another Hand* quite
 different from the former, and of a more
 pleasant and lovely aspect, came in to
 her *assistance*; and not only *struggled* with
 the former Hands, until it *overcame* them;
 but, in the mean time, did sweetly up-
 hold and refresh her. And, said she, I
 thought that the reflection I had of this
 matter

matter at that time, was, That *the two Hands* I was conflicting with, were *Corruption and Temptation*; and that *the Hand* that came to my relief, was *the Hand of the Almighty*, put forth in the *Aids* of his *Spirit*, thorow *Christ*, to carry me safely thorow all my *Tryals*. Which, when she was relating, one said, May not the two Hands be supposed as well to mean *Temptation and Affliction*? To which she humbly replied: *I include Affliction under the notion of Temptation; but what ever be left out, Corruption must be reckoned to be included.*

The Subject, for the most part, of all her Discourses with serious Persons, was still *divine and spiritual*. And if at any time the strain of the Discourse were turned otherwise, she would be ready to say, *Come, let us leave such petty Matters, and talk of what deserves our Thoughts and Considerations.* And when she could not come at her Friends, with whom she could be most free; she would be sure to afford them some Work by Letters on such Subjects, as might be mutually edifying. And indeed, in Writing, she commonly express'd her self in a singular vein, both as to *Spirituality* and *Good Thought*. And as to this, I hope it may
not

not be unedifying to name you two or three Passages amongst many.

Writing to a Friend, concerning her spiritual state, she thus expresses herself.——“I must acknowledge that I
 “am using the *Means of Grace*, as
 “much as I am able, with that little
 “measure of *Faith* I have, (in a sense
 “of great *Guilt* daily contracted,) so as
 “to have constant recourse to the blood
 “of *sprinkling*, for *Cleansing and Heal-*
 “*ing*; whence I have attained peace
 “as to the matter of *Justification*. And
 “I must also acknowledge that I am
 “waiting and depending on *Christ* dayly
 “for the *Influences of his Spirit* every mo-
 “ment, for the assisting me to resist temp-
 “tations, mortify corruptions, and perform
 “hard and difficult duties (as indeed all
 “duties are to me,) as also to bear up un-
 “der afflictions. But I must tell you,
 “that here lies the very stress of my
 “Tryal, that God seems not (at least
 “sensibly to me) to make out his pro-
 “mise, as to the proportioning his supplies
 “of strength, according as my day of
 “trouble and tryal is. I might here take
 “up all the expressions of lamentation u-
 “sed in Scripture and bewail my state.
 “But I check my self and acquiesce, be-
 “cause

"cause it is the Lord that does it. And
 "sure I am, it is not so much comfort-
 "ing manifestations, that I desire, as
 "supporting grace, that I may carry to
 "the honour of Religion. But my tem-
 "per is suspicious, and I am always ex-
 "pecting new troubles; for waves call on
 "waves in my case. You tell me, that
 "we are in storms to hope for calms. as
 "well as in calms to prepare for storms.
 "And I grant it should be so. But I sup-
 "pose notwithstanding, that you are
 "not ignorant; that it is more easy for
 "us, when in the light, to discern a cloud
 "at a distance; than it is to see any thing
 "in the dark distinctly, a far off especially.
 "But I will conclude, with what has been
 "much on my mind, I mean *Herbert's*
 "*Poem*, called, *Bitter-Sweet*; which I
 "return you, with some Variation and
 "Alteration, and which I think does
 "now exactly hold forth my Case.

*My Dear, tho' Absent Lord,
 Since thou canst Love, yet Hide,
 Withdraw, and yet support;
 I will thy Will abide.*

*I will Complain and Pray,
 Bewail and yet Approve;*

And

The Mourners

*And all my Gloomy Days,
I will Believe and Love.*

At another she thus Writes. — “ I
 “ am fully *satisfied* there may be much
 “ *Love in Corrections: For what Child is*
 “ *there that the Father Chastneth not?* And
 “ my earnest desire is, That while my
 “ *Father* keeps the *Rod* in his hand, I may
 “ hang about him, and never cease my
 “ *wrestling Supplications*, until I get the
 “ sanctified use of *Afflictions*. But in-
 “ deed, this is not the sad part of my
 “ *Case*, that *God* does not carry it to
 “ me, as a *most wise, merciful, and com-*
 “ *passionate Father* in all things: But it
 “ lyes here, That I do not carry it as
 “ the *Child of such a Father*, with that
 “ *filial, believing, resigning, cheerful frame*
 “ and temper of *Spirit*, that is so accepta-
 “ ble to him, and so *sutable* to such a *Re-*
 “ *lation*. But I adore the *Wisdom of his*
 “ *Love*, even in his *Withdrawings*. But
 “ Oh! how can I be satisfied with my
 “ self, in not imitating more fully the
 “ *Saints of old*, (and some I know yet
 “ *alive*) who breathed after the better
 “ *Country*: Which *Temper* *God* hath
 “ so far owned and *honoured*, as to sub-
 “ joyn, That therefore he is not ashamed

"to be called their God. This, this, would be
 "an effectual Remedy against all my Distempers :
 "Which therefore I pray for it, and desire
 "you to do so also on my account.

She earnestly and constantly prayed for and
 breathed after the Influences of the Spirit. Her
 thoughts of which she thus expresses to a Friend.

—"Since God hath so freely promised to
 "give his Spirit to those that ask it; have we not
 "great Incouragement thence, to desire and hum-
 "bly beg for a more plentiful effusion thereof
 "upon us; that it may be, as water upon the
 "thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; that our
 "wilderness may blossom as the Rose, and our de-
 "sert barren hearts be turned into a fruitful Gar-
 "den, irriguated with Springs of Living water.
 "For by these and many such figurative Expres-
 "sions in Scripture I understand the powering
 "forth of the Spirit upon us; And the conside-
 "ration of them hath been very supporting to
 "me under my present wants and unfruitful-
 "ness, and a great incouragement to wait and
 "hope in God, that it shall be better in due
 "time. Oh this blessed Spirit! What a change
 "would it make in the world, and on particular
 "persons, were it given more plentifully. For
 "which let us pray, that it may be given as an
 "Inlightning Spirit, as a Guiding and Conduct-
 "ing Spirit, as a Quickning and Comforting Spi-
 "rit. This would make us walk more holyly

“and humbly, more prudently and wisely, more
 “thankfully and chearfully, more above our fears
 “and sorrows, with more Christian courage and
 “fortitude of Spirit, throughout our whole course,
 “and with a temper more becoming the chil-
 “dren of such a Father, and the Heirs of such
 “an inheritance. Would not this make you fit-
 “ter for the high and noble work of the Mi-
 “nistry, and make you more usefull and success-
 “full in Preaching the Everlasting Gospel? And
 “would not this make us both more servicable
 “in our several stations and capacities, to glo-
 “rifie God, which is the great end of our Lives,
 “and I hope the great desire of our Souls. And
 “therefore I know nothing more worthy of
 “our most earnest wrestlings and greatest im-
 “portunities. For, since I hope God hath
 “given us an interest in himself, thorow his
 “dear Son and our great Mediator; and so
 “hath accepted our Persons in Justification, tho-
 “row the imputed righteousness of Christ: I think
 “the next work we have to do, is to be day-
 “ly interceding for the Influences of the Spirit in
 “order to carry on the great business of sancti-
 “fication, that so we may grow in a fitness for
 “every duty, and a meetness for the future state,
 “that we are hastning into.

It were long to produce all or many of the
 Expressions of this nature that might be given.
 And therefore I shall only add one more, in a

Letter

Letter to a Friend; upon a *Reprieve from Death*, that she had providentially got beyond expectation, for a time, and which she was apprehensive *he* had some hand in, (with "others,) as a "Return of Prayer.—Now *methinks* (says "she) I have been saying to you, (*whom* I believe to have been *instrumental* in this matter,) "is this *your kindness* to your *Friend*? When I "seem'd to have got so near to the *harbour* of "an hoped for *rest*, to use all your *force* and "strength, to bring me back again into this *stormy* and troublesome *Sea*, where I must expect to "be tossed with new *Tempests*, before I get to "shore; of *which* I have now a much clearer *Prospect*, than of any *service* I can do here in this "world. Did I ever desire you to *pray* for *Life*? "Or was it not rather, that I might be carried "thorow the dark valley of the *shadow* of *Death*? "But I must submit, since I know you think you "have *acted Duty* in this; and since all things of "this nature are *ordered* by a wise and gracious "God for good to us. And this does abundantly "satisfie me in *this*, and I hope in all other "dispensations concerning me.

And now from these *few Expressions*, as well as from *what hints* have been besides given of this *pious Person*, we may easily perceive *what Spirit* she was of, and *what* her great *work* and *Business* in the world was. She wisely chose the *Better* part, which none could take from her: The

whole of her *Life* being one continued declaration that she sought a better Country; as knowing that we have no continuing City or place of abode here. Thorow a patient continuance in well-doing, she sought for honour and glory and immortality, both in *Health* and *Sickness*. And, tho' an universal Decay of Spirits, (in Gods wise determination,) did incapacitate her, in the hour of Deaths approach, from having that sensible joy and ravishment, which sometimes the Saints then have, from the prospect of the nearness of *Glory*; yet that Faith and Affiance, that Reverence and Love, and that Resignation and full satisfaction, which she then expressed, were such clear Evidences of her Grace, and such happy Prognosticks of that Happiness she was entering upon the Possession of; that we may justly admire Gods Mercy in all this, both to Her and Us.

And now, my Friends, obey the Instruction and imitate the Pattern that I have at this time set before you. Which that we may do, let us fervently implore the divine Grace, and seriously improve the Gospel-Means. And then I question not, but we shall come in due time to find this Doctrine verified in our own Experience; That better is the Day of Death, than the Day of Birth. Amen.

TO THE
MEMORY of the Truly Religious,
Mrs. *Susanna Soame*;

WHO

Departed this Life at *Thurlow* in *Suffolk*, Feb. 14.

An. Dom. 169 $\frac{1}{2}$.

A RT thou then gone, thou sweet and humble *Mind*,
Leaving thy *Friends* thus sorrowing behind?
And can our *Thoughts* within our *breasts* be pent,
Since sorrows double are, that have no vent?

No! No! My weeping *Muse* shall drop a Verse,
And offer at thy much lamented *Hearse*:
Thy *Piety* and *Worth* deserve no less.
And if my *Lines* be in an humble *Dress*;
It yet may *Mourners* suit, since 'tis requir'd,
That such in *Black*, not *Gold*, should be attir'd.

Had I a Pen drop't from an *Angels Wing*,
Or could I hear the *Anthems* thou dost sing;
Since thou art joyn'd unto the *Quire* above,
And swallow'd up in *Raptures* high of Love:
My *Thoughts* might then, 'tis like, my *Pen* inspire,
with such like *Notes*, as mov'd Wise *Solmons Lyre*,
When he did sing the *Myssick Loves* between
Heav'n's *Glorious Darling* and his *Purchas'd Queen*:
For now that *Song* (thou lov'dst so here) is known
To thee, since thou hast reach'd the *Heavenly Throne*.

Yet when I think, how *Holy Paul* before,
Tho' thus rapt up to *Heaven*, could do no more,

But

But only tell he saw *Things Glorious*,
 Which he nor could nor durst express to us:
 I'm therefore left in *silence* to adore,
 That *Hand* which casts a *Veil* such things before,
 And wills us to believe they are too great
 For this *Imperfect State*, where we await,
 Until we also from our *Corps* remove,
 And mount all Earthly Dust and Shades, above.
 -Wherefore I'm left to muse *on what is past*,
 And on thy *by-gone-Life* some Thoughts to cast;
 And here, methinks, as present still to day,
 I see thy *Face*, and hear *thee thus to say*;

[*An Acrostical Character of her Life.*]

*S*oar fain I would above each earthly thing,
*U*nto my Lord, of all my Joy, the Spring.
*S*uch is my *Study*, but alas! I find
*A*ll my *Attempts* too weak, too dark my *Mind*;
*N*ow *Clouds* bemist me, *Grief* o're-pow'rs my Soul,
*N*ow *Fears* alternate like the Waves do rowl,
*A*nd all my Comforts, Joy and Hope controul. }

*S*weet *Glances* from my God, yet now and then,
*O*blidge my Soul from Sorrow to refrain,
*A*nd blast my *Griefs*, and cause my *Fears* to fly.
*M*y Case thus changeth too and fro, whilst I
*E*ach day for *Heaven* long, yet *fear to dye*. }

- Yet, tho' all is but Folly that is said
 By *Living Mortals* of th' *Immortal Dead*:
 Yet since we justly do conclude thou'rt blest,
 And now from Pains and Sorrows all at rest,
 Methinks I hear thy *Voice* from Heaven high,
 Drop silent to my *Ear* thus through the *Sky*;

[*An Acrostical Character of her Death.*]

*S*oar now I do, above each earthly thing,
*U*nto my Lord of all my Joy the Spring.
*S*uch was my *Aim* below, but then did find
*A*ll my *Attempts* too weak, too dark my *Mind* :
*N*o *Cloud* bemists me now, and on my Soul,
*N*o *Grief* or *Fear* alternately doth rowl,
*A*s an *Allay* my Comforts to controul.

*S*weet *Sights* of God and Christ I do obtain :
O sweet my *Life* ! Sweet *Place* where I remain !
*A*ngels and *Saints* are now my Company ;
*M*y *Friends* below I'd pity, did not I,
*E*xpect to see them to *Eternity*.

The Epitaph.

U Nderneath this *Stone* doth lye •
 Dust precious, for the *Memory*
 Of a sweet *Saint*, who once did dwell
 In such a fading *Mortal Cell* :
 Who having got *Gods Pass*, took wing
 Upwards to *Heaven*, to live and sing
 Triumphant *Hallelujahs there*,
 And breath more free in *Sweeter Air*.

An Acrostical Memorial.

Since Upwards Soar'd, All Notions New Attend
 Seen Objects : Ancient Molestations End.

As the last Expression of Friendship on Earth,
 These Lines are Offered by

R. P.

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CORRIGEND A

Serm. 1. pag. 7. lin. 20. after *Abēa* insert *and*. p. 17. l. 20. after *follow* insert *that*. p. 28. l. 10. after *Scripture* insert *expressed*. p. 45. l. 1. for *she* read *they*. p. 47. l. 14. after *which* insert *is*. p. 48. l. 8. after *her* insert *to observe her*. Serm. 2. p. 55. l. ult. after *must* insert *not*. p. 72. l. 7. for *Epō*. read *Ep*.

